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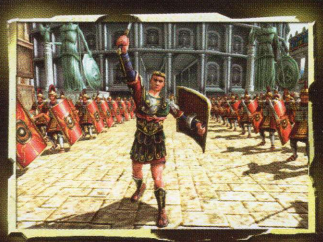

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BEST BITS!

The cream of the crop in this month's *GM* – the UK's finest, and indeed funniest, videogaming publication...

NEW SUPER MARIO BROS

P58 He's the grandaddy of platforming, and the undisputed *Godfather* of all that is a-leapin' and a-jumpin'. Yup, Mario's back to teach us just why it is that Nintendo do the 'running from left to right' thing better than anyone else – *new* ideas and *plenty* of them. Believe it when we tell you that Mario's first original platformer for fifteen years is as sweet as you could possibly hope for.

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

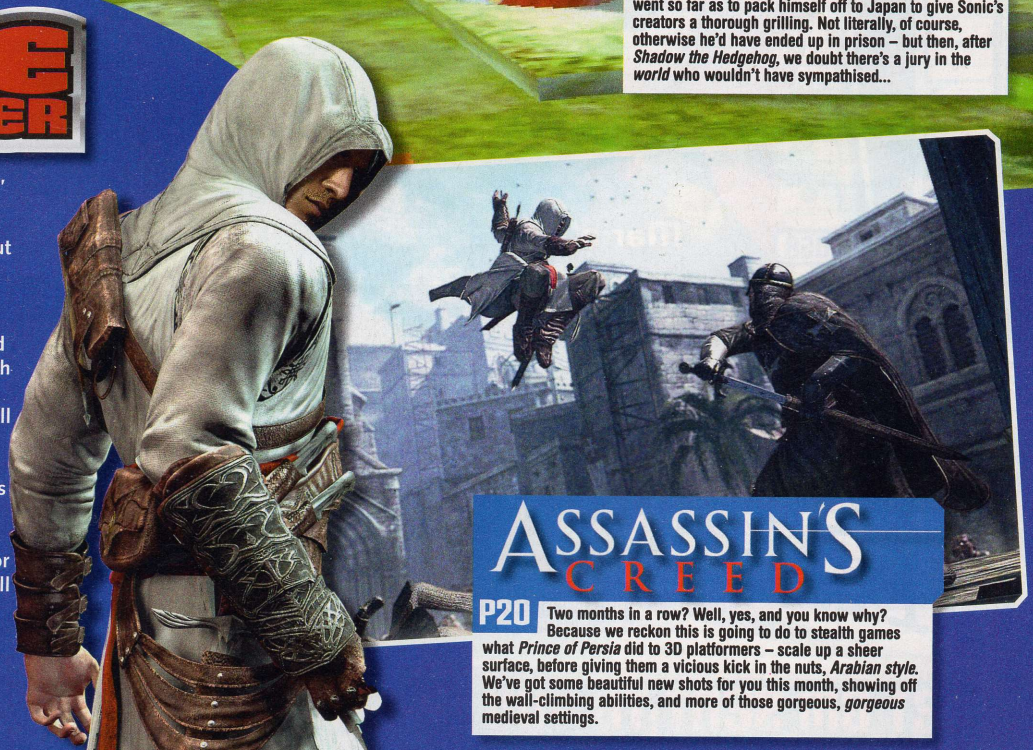
P42 Who fancies an eight-page hedgehog love-in, then? We've not only got three new games spread across all next-gen platforms, but Robin even went so far as to pack himself off to Japan to give Sonic's creators a thorough grilling. Not literally, of course, otherwise he'd have ended up in prison – but then, after *Shadow the Hedgehog*, we doubt there's a jury in the *world* who wouldn't have sympathised...

WELCOME TO GAMESMASTER

Phew. Last month was E3, the world's biggest game show. And although medically we've just about recovered – the flashing behind my eyes only happens when they're closed now – our poor old brains are still reeling with what we saw. Every day, someone on Team *GM* will suddenly stop typing or put their pad down, look up and say "will your arm get tired when you're playing Wii? or "how exclusive will *GTA* on 360's extra content be"? So many questions. Everyone who loves games wants to know more. Let us know what you need to know by wanging an email to gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk or writing to the usual address. This is the only place where you'll get the unbiased view of all three consoles, what they can do and how good their games are. Exciting times, my friends! Enjoy your *GM!*

Robin

Robin, The Ed



ASSASSIN'S CREED

P20 Two months in a row? Well, yes, and you know why? Because we reckon this is going to do to stealth games what *Prince of Persia* did to 3D platformers – scale up a sheer surface, before giving them a vicious kick in the nuts, *Arabian style*. We've got some beautiful new shots for you this month, showing off the wall-climbing abilities, and more of those gorgeous, *gorgeous* medieval settings.

SELECT YOUR MODE

GAMES MASTER

THE MASTER OF GAMES SINCE 1993

COVER STORIES

SONIC'S BACK!.....PAGE 42
Celebrate Sonic's birthday with a next-gen blowout!

GTA: LIBERTY CITY STORIES.....PAGE 62
The PSP classic comes to PS2!

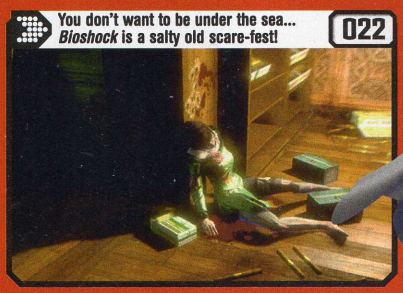
ASSASSIN'S CREED.....PAGE 20
The PS3's best game so far!

ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS.....PAGE 34
New shots of Link's finest moment!

GM MOST W

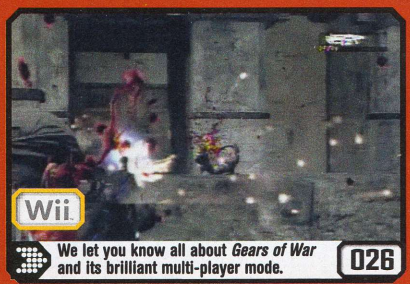
The best of the games coming your

Assassin's Creed is next-gen stealth-slaughter at is very finest! 020



You don't want to be under the sea... *Bioshock* is a salty old scare-fest! 022

Create a micro-organism and evolve it to take over the universe! That's *Spore*. 028



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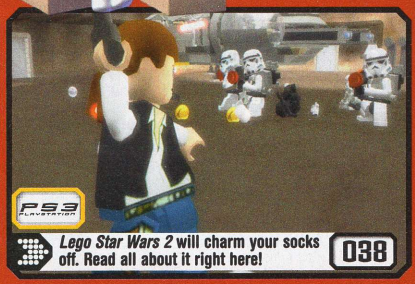

Lego Star Wars 2 will charm your socks off. Read all about it right here! 038

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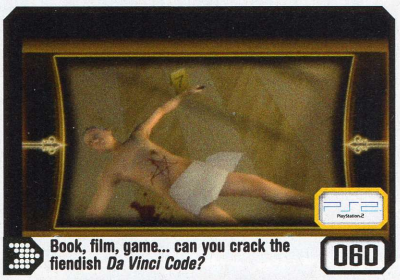

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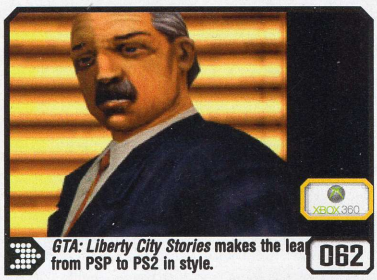

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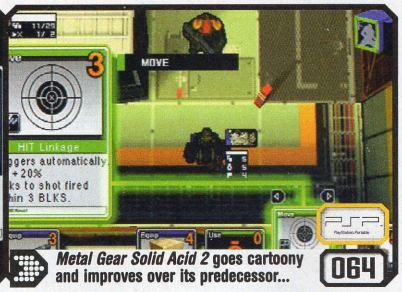

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CHEAT MASTER

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GET GM SENT TO YOU +PAY 30% LESS! 084

SAVE 30%

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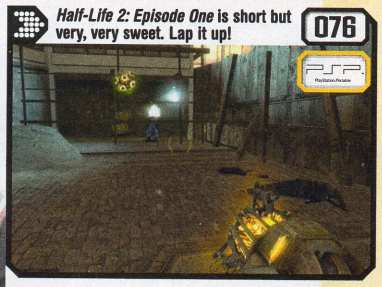
The cutest game known to man? *Loco Roco* could be it... 068



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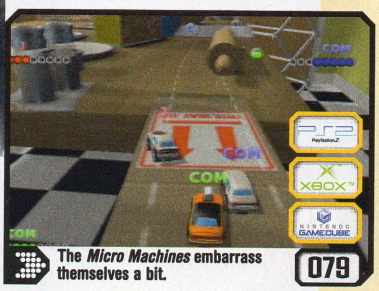

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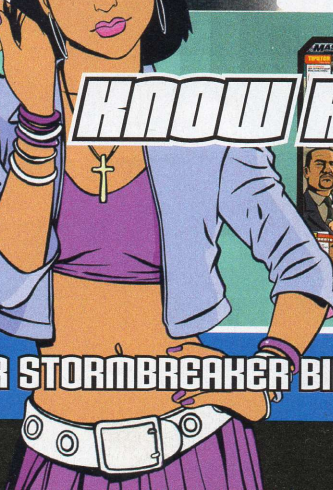

OVER £2000 OF PRIZES TO WIN! 096

ALEX RIDER STORMBREAKER BIKE AND GOODIES!

A-Z OF GAMES

Here's nearly every game featured in this issue listed for quick flicking...

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TEAM GM

Travelling faster than the speed of funny...

ROBIN

CHRONIC SONIC

"If I could run at the speed of light," muttered Robin, sifting through his science homework, "I'd watch horse races, then sprint back to the bookies and bet on them before they'd happened." We're not sure that's how it... "Then again, I'd probably just trip over and do myself a mischief. No, I'll just stay at home, thanks." Phew.

FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE?
Loco Roco
FAVOURITE BROTHERS?
Warner Brothers
HOW WILL YOU AFFORD A PS3?
Betting it all on black

KATH

DEAD RINGER

"Like Sonic, I collect rings." says Kath, "This one's the sound of an antique telephone... and this is the sound of Plymouth fire station's alarm bell." Erm... "Brrrrring! Brrrring!" We made our excuses and... "Brrrring!"

FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE?
Loco Roco
FAVOURITE BROTHERS?
The Mitchells
HOW WILL YOU AFFORD A PS3?
Irradiate Fort Knox

TRON LADY

FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE?
Tron
FAVOURITE BROTHERS?
The Bitmap Brothers
HOW WILL YOU AFFORD A PS3?
Illegal light-bike racing

FEELING BLUE

What's that, *Tron* Lady? You were the fast blue one before Sonic was invented? We know, *Tron* Lady – that's why we sometimes stroke your lovely face at night, when everyone's gone home. We wish *we* could run away. With you. Oh yes.

KIERON

FAVOURITE GAME THIS ISSUE
Liberty City Stories
FAVOURITE BROTHERS
The Hardy Boys
HOW I'M GOING TO AFFORD A PS3...
Living on chips and bread

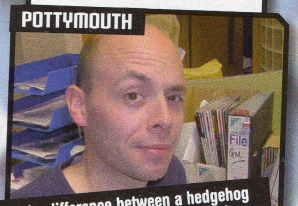
"Dr Robotnik should be ashamed of himself." huffed Kerion, "Always trying to kill Sonic and take over the world. What about his hippopotamus oath?" Um, hippocratic? "Yeah, he's that as well. The big oval twit."

DOCTOR WHO?

JES

FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE?
New Super Mario Bros
FAVOURITE BROTHERS?
The Chuckle Brothers
HOW WILL YOU AFFORD A PS3?
Rob a *lot* of grannies

POTTYMOUTH



"What's the difference between a hedgehog and a landrover?" chuckled Jes, wheezing under the strain of his own comedic genius. "Give up? On a hedgehog, right, the *spikes are on the outside!* Hoo!" We stared blankly. "Ah, no, wait. *Pricks*. That's what I meant to say. Pricks! Sorry."

GERAINT

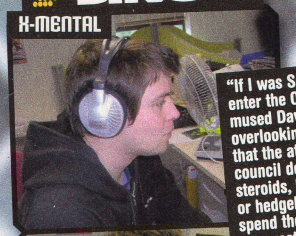
FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE?
Loco Roco
FAVOURITE BROTHERS?
The Righteous Brothers
HOW WILL YOU AFFORD A PS3?
Remortgage my house

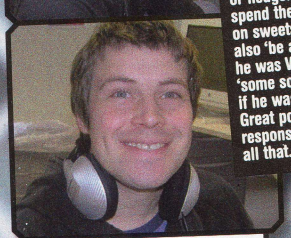
HOG WILD

"Remember, kids, you should always check your bonfires for hedgehogs." admonished Geraint, displaying the tender side we haven't seen since he got promoted to dep ed and started hitting us all on the knuckles with a ruler. "I found five in mine last year. They taste lovely with a dab of butter.' The man's an animal.

DAVE

X-MENTAL





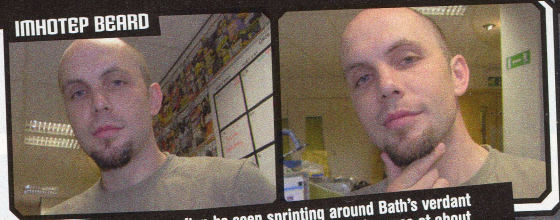
"If I was Sonic, I'd enter the Olympics." mused Dave, overlooking the fact that the athletics council doesn't allow steroids, launch pads or hedgehogs. "Then I'd spend the prize money on sweets." Dave would also 'be a boxer' if he was Wolverine, or 'some sort of magician' if he was Magneto. Great power, great responsibility and all that.

FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE?
Winning Eleven 10
FAVOURITE (NON-MARIO) BROTHERS?
The Brothers Grimm
HOW WILL YOU AFFORD A PS3?
Bikini car-wash

JOEL

FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE?
Metal Gear Acid 2
FAVOURITE BROTHERS?
The Jungle Brothers
HOW WILL YOU AFFORD A PS3?
Buy less shoes.

IMHOTEP BEARD

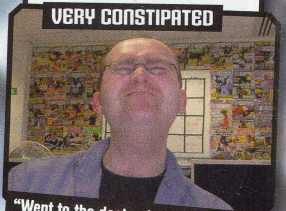


Like Sonic, Joel can often be seen sprinting around Bath's verdant hills in a spiffy pair of red trainers. Unlike Sonic, he goes at about three miles an hour, doesn't have a girlfriend and collapses like a broken accordion at the slightest hint of an incite. Apart from that, they could be brothers...

STEVE

FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE?
Half-Life 2: Episode One
FAVOURITE BROTHERS?
The Wright Brothers
HOW WILL YOU AFFORD A PS3?
Working like a dog

VERY CONSTIPATED



"Went to the doctors' the other day" said Steve, sliding effortlessly into a Bernard Manning impersonation. "He said I might feel a bit of a prick. Then he jammed a hedgehog into my arm. I've absolutely no idea why."

ROB

FAVE GAME THIS ISSUE?
Loco Roco
FAVOURITE BROTHERS?
The Bee Gees
HOW WILL YOU AFFORD A PS3?
Big Barry the loan shark

SLIGHTLY ORANGE

"Cream The Rabbit? Silver The Hedgehog? What ridiculous names!" muttered Rob, sifting through mugshots of Sonic's pals. "I don't go around calling myself 'Pink The Human,' do I?" Um... "Then again, that's because I'm actually an evil doppleganger from the past, bent on destruction. No, wait..."

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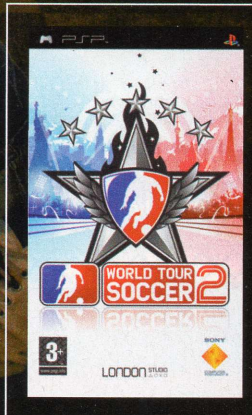


www.yourpsp.com

A word of advice son: save those silky skills for where they belong: World Tour Soccer 2. In this game it's not just the winning that counts, it's the style you do it in: the better you play, the more points you get. And you'll have plenty of opportunities to strut your stuff. WTS2 has 11 different game modes that actually encourage you to play different styles as you show the best teams in the world what's what. And there are even more game modes downloadable after launch. Bring. It. On.

100% NEW!

The latest next-gen news and every big game unveiled!

EIEF Edinburgh Interactive Entertainment Festival 21-23 August 2006

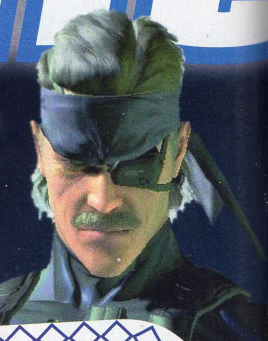
EDINBURGH SHOW!

One of the most important events in the gaming calendar returns to bonny Scotland this August – yep, the Edinburgh Interactive Entertainment Festival is back in town! A kind of mini E3, it's a top chance for members of the public to hobnob with some of the biggest names in the videogaming industry, as well as checking out a host of next-gen 360, PS3 and Wii titles. For full details and ticket prices, go check out www.eief.co.uk.

STATE

We lay our next-gen cards on the table!

With all this talk about PlayStation network platforms, Xbox digital content delivery and integrated Wii Opera browsers, you'd be forgiven for wondering what on earth was going on with all this next-gen console talk. So we've decided to play the three consoles off against one another. Who holds the trump cards?



XBOX 360

From: Microsoft
Out: Now!
Price: £209.99 (Core)
£279.99 (Premium)

THE LOWDOWN

The first next-gen machine has a year's head-start over its competitors. Despite a few nasty stock issues, some excellent games and a reasonable price point have ensured the 360 has built itself a reasonable following.

E3 PERFORMANCE

MS whipped out all the big guns – including (gasp!) *Halo 3* and (wow!) *GTA 4*. With *Gears of War* looking sweeter than ever and Live going from strength to strength, 360 is looking like a top machine. A deserved 8/10 saw it blag second place just behind Nintendo in our E3 show ratings.

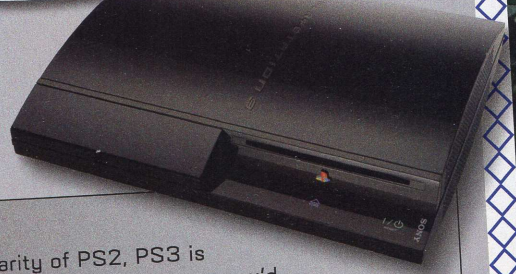
FUTURE PROSPECTS

- Oops! Microsoft gaming supremo Peter Moore claims "nobody cares about (Xbox 360's) backwards compatibility" before claiming he was quoted out of context and that MS are beavering away on their compatibility list.
- *Halo 3*, 360's killer app, was solid enough to have been shown in a playable, multi-player form at E3, according to devs Bungie. As it was, the only glimpse of *Halo 3* was a trailer using the in-game engine.
- The Xbox 360 camera – dubbed Vision – will be launched in the UK on 19th September. It'll allow Live users to display their faces in online matches, as well as mapping their faces into games.

GM SAYS 360 is a major player in the next-gen war, with the supremely tasty bonus that you can simply mosey down to the shops and pick one up today!

PS3

From: Sony
Out: November 17th
Price: £340 (Core)
£425 (Premium)



THE LOWDOWN

Thanks to the staggering popularity of PS2, PS3 is odds-on favourite to clean up this time round – or so you'd think. In fact, problems regarding Blu-ray spec finalisation, launch dates, and price points have given pause for thought. Still, given their top reputation with the average game, only a fool would bet against Sony.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

- PlayStation guru Ken Kutaragi's latest comments mention that PS3 is an "entertainment computer" that will eventually render hard drives obsolete – instead 'cyberworlds' powered by Cell processors will reign supreme.
- PS3 will be upgradeable. "I think it's okay to release a (PS3) configuration every year", says Kutaragi. Could we see a wealth of PS3 upgrades – like larger hard drives or re-writeable Blu-ray functions - in the years to come?
- PS3's basic online service will be free. Kutaragi said: "On the PS3, basic services will be taken for granted while content will be the bread and butter of our business."
- Phil Harrison delcared PS3 will kill off the PC: "We believe that the PS3 will be the place where our users play games, watch films, browse the web, and use other computer functions. The PlayStation 3 is a computer. we do not need the PC."
- Core and Premium PS3s won't just differ in terms of innards, you'll also get more bling - a sleeker black finish, silver trim and chrome logo - if you opt for the pricier model.

E3 PERFORMANCE

Disappointing. The reality of Sony's machine seemed to rely on the odd pinched idea (the tilt-sensitive controller), a hefty price tag (£400+) and some variable-looking games. Cue a miserable 6/10 in our E3 ratings. Still, *that* MGS4 trailer was the star of the show, and it's massively powerful.

GM SAYS The PlayStation brand enjoys such a cult level of fanboydom that it'd take a seismic slip-up by Sony to ruin PS3's chances. Will that *really* happen? Not a chance... expect PS3 to be *massive*.

RACE RELATIONS

In *GM*173 we mistakenly reviewed *Juiced: Eliminator* using early stage *preview* code. Oops! Unsurprising, given the unfinished nature of the game we weren't overly impressed with the driving action on offer, awarding *Eliminator* a decent if unspectacular 72%. Having now received the finished review code from our friends over at THQ, we were well impressed – hence a new, improved score of 80% for this top of the range racer this ish. Sincere apols for the mistake.

TETRIS LIVE

The recent DS reimagining of *Tetris* has sparked Tetrahedron-mania all over again in *GM* Towers, so it's great to see the classic puzzler is set to make its debut on 360 – via Live Arcade. Published by THQ, it'll no doubt go down a storm in the multi-player department. Also up for release during August September: *Street Fighter II HFE* (400 MS Points), *Pac-Man* and *Frogger* (400 points each), *Roboblitz* (800 points) and *Lumines Live* (a mighty 1200 points).

OF PLAY!

Wii™

From: Nintendo
Out: TBC (2006 US and Jap, TBC UK)
Price: TBC (Approx £130-£180)

THE LOWDOWN

A bizarrely-named machine that's hardly state-of-the-art in terms of horsepower, but light years ahead of the competition in terms of innovation. We mean, using a *motion sensitive remote control* to play games like never before? Pure genius.

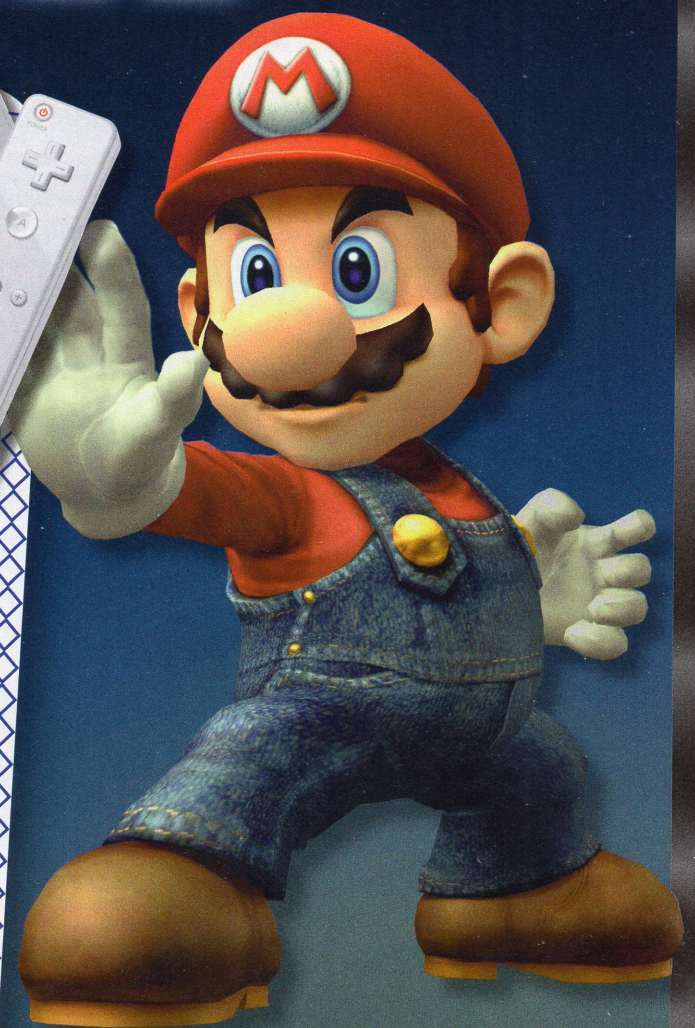
E3 PERFORMANCE

The star of the show, the Wii dazzled journos and members of the gaming public alike. We conducted orchestras, played *proper* tennis, and leaped between galaxies with Mario. Result? Ninty's E3 performance copped a mighty 9/10 in our last ish.

FUTURE PROSPECTS

- The Nintendo DS hardware can not only communicate with the Wii, but the touch screen is rumoured to be used as a controller!
- Punters will be able to download DS game demos through Wii. "Users would wake up each morning, find the LED lamp on their Wii flashing, and know that Nintendo has sent them something", said Satoru Iwata.
- Opera has confirmed that their internet browser will come pre-loaded onto Wii. This means near-instant net access, while Opera are also claiming navigation should be "easier than using Opera on a desktop".
- Rumours reach us suggesting Wii will have a built-in camera, allowing users to snap piccies of themselves before scanning them onto characters in games. An online headset is also planned, as are official SD memory cards that range from 2Gb to 7Gb.
- Since Wii's controller has a built-in mic, many are speculating that the console could even act as a Skype-style telephone.

GM SAYS Could Nintendo finally have come up with a console adored by casual and hardcore gamers alike? Wii think so! We're not saying it'll change the world, but gaming at least will never be the same again...



HEY, WHAT ABOUT CURRENT GEN?

Relax guys and gals - there's still plenty of life left in the current generation (well, until the autumn, at least). Here's the state of play for each of the main consoles...

PS2 – *Still* the strongest-selling console of the bunch. Still has a fair bit of juice left in the tank – think *God of War 2*, *Need for Speed: Carbon*, *WWE SmackDown Vs. RAW 2007*, *Okami* and *Scarface*, to name but a few – before PS3 finally launches later this year.

Xbox – The launch of the 360 has all but sealed the original black box's fate, with just a trickle of releases each month. You'll still find all of EA's latest and greatest forthcoming releases (*NFS*, *FIFA*, *Superman Returns*, etc.) on Xbox, though. Going seriously cheap second-hand already...

GameCube – It's been all but dead in the water for a while now, although every so often an unsung gem like *Chibi-Robo* causes a minor ripple. Then – of course – there's *Zelda: Twilight Princess*, so any Cube owners will hardly be in a hurry to trade in their love boxes *too* soon...

100% NEW!

DS TRI-UMPHS!

Unfortunately, what you see here is *not* an official Limited Edition *Legend of Zelda*-themed DS, but the handiwork of talented Ninty fan Kotomi – out to prove there's still life left in the original DS even after the release of the more aesthetically pleasing Lite. See more at: http://kotomiblog.blogspot.com.

DS/PSP BEATER?

Yep, you read right. There's a new kid on the handheld block (no, *not* Gizmondo). Running on the homebrew Linux, the £135 GP2X (follow up to the GP32) is an open-source machine that'll run SNES and Megadrive emulators, and old PC games like Doom and Quake. Surf over to http://gp2x.co.uk for the full lowdown on this amazing piece of kit...

CARBON DATED!

New *NFS* taking it to the edge...

After revving its way to pole position last Chrimbo, gaming's most popular racer (*Gran Turismo who?*) is flashing its headlights, caning the nitrous and drifting back onto a next-gen console near you. Readers – put your hands together for (ta da!) *Need for Speed: Carbon.*

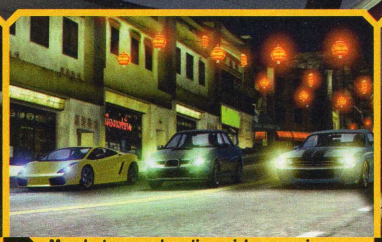
After *Underground* went all dark on us and *Most Wanted* introduced us to speed cam-wielding coppers, *Carbon* once again shifts into a whole new gear. Taking its cue from THQ's *Juiced*, *Carbon* is all about crews and rivalries, so get ready to battle for turf by entering the perilous, testosterone-fueled world of Canyon racing. That's right – *bloody great scary canyons.*

Looking even more gorgeous than *2 Fast 2 Furious's* Eva Mendes, *Carbon* is screeching onto PS3, 360, Wii and PC this autumn. And we'll have the world's first playtest in the next issue of *GamesMaster!*

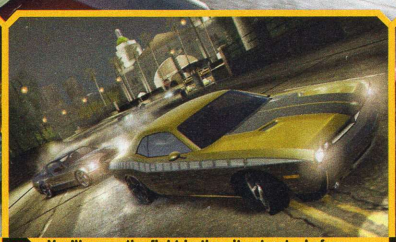
CREW CUT:

Carbon challenges you to recruit a crew from scratch that'll eventually come to dominate the city and surrounding canyonlands. Naturally, you'll have to take down some bad-ass rival crews along the way – beat them down by thrashing their times and scores on well-known drags. There are long standing feuds and inherent rivalries between the Tuner, Muscle and Exotics drivers, so pick your side and let battle commence...

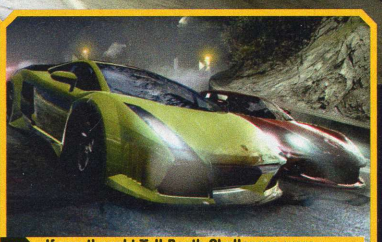
Prepare to roll those sleeves up and fight dirty if you want the dollars, respect and skirt in *Carbon*...



Muscle, tuner and exotic – pick your poison. It's a car fan's wet dream...



You'll carry the fight in the city streets, before revving over to them thar hills for showdowns...



If you thought Toll Booth Challenges were tough, wait 'till you hit the canyonlands!

ONLINE ORGY:

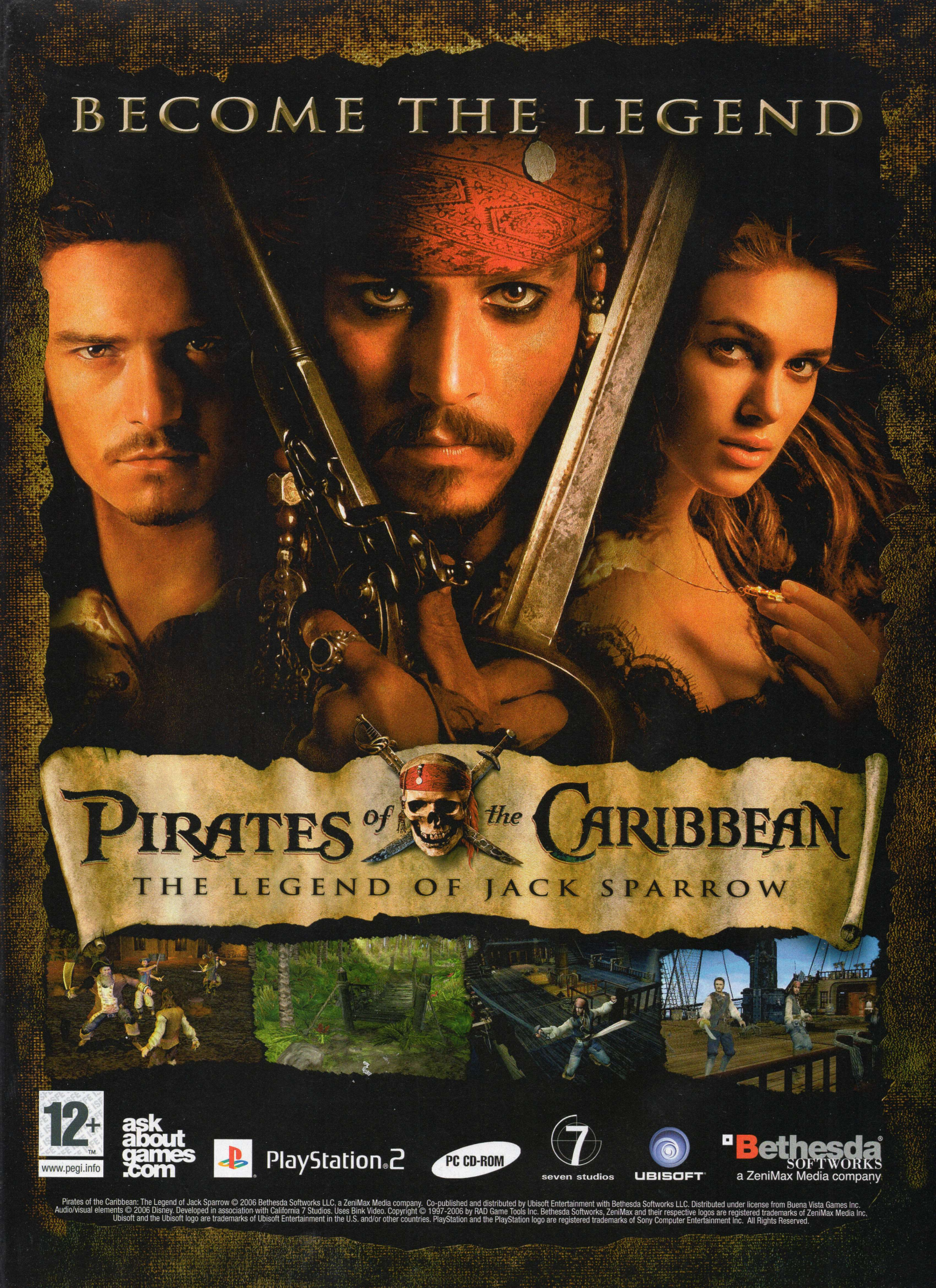
Online racing promises to be a major part of *Carbon*. Pimping your ride will also be more detailed than ever before thanks to new 'Autosculpt' tech, while we're also promised the return of the fuzz to *really* crank up that heat meter...

CANYON-BALL RUN:

An underground phenomenon born on the hillsides of Japan, after a cop crackdown forced illicit street racing out of the city. Picture a steep mountain wall extending to the heavens on one side of the road and a sheer drop to the valley below on the other - with only a sliver of guardrail separating asphalt from oblivion. Suddenly just staying alive seems a challenge, let alone wasting your dastardly opponent!

DUEL MASTERS:

Once you and your crew put a few wins together, you'll be challenged to a Canyon Duel by an opposing crew leader. These epic races are all about adrenaline, danger and consequences. Firstly, pursue your rival though the most dangerous environments ever seen in *NFS* and clock up the points by sticking *this* close to their bumper. After you finally overtake your foe you'll then try to rack up as much distance between your two rides before the race finishes. Two stages, *too cool!*



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100% NEW!

MORE MOVIES

Having shipped an awesome three million copies around the globe, Nintendo's DS spectacular *Animal Crossing: Wild World* is fast approaching *Pokemon*-sized levels of fandom. Now it's due for a big screen animated adaptation, helmed by acclaimed Japanese anime director Jouji Shimura!

TINGLE ALL OVER

That oh-so-loveable/hideously irritating *Zelda* cameo-merchant Tingle appears to have bagged his own game. Yes, he of the skin-tight leotard is all set to star in a new RPG and it's called *Fresh Tingle's Rose Coloured Rupee Land!* Tingle will journey across Hyrule gathering rupees and generally making a nuisance of himself. Hateful little goblin-man that he is.

HALO 3

METAL GEAR SOLID 4

GUNS OF THE PATRIOTS TACTICAL ESPIONAGE ACTION

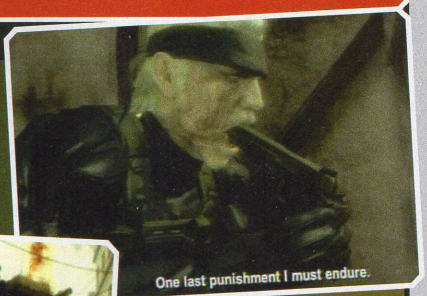
NEXT YEAR'S BIGGEST GAMES GO HEAD TO HEAD...

We might only have seen a few trailers for each, but the anticipation in the *GM* office is reaching fever pitch. This is how we're currently weighing up the PS3 and 360's hottest of hot properties.

THE BIG TEASE

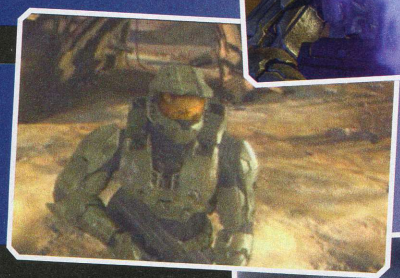
Master Chief arrives on the earth to find a city-sized bulge deep in a crater in an African savannah– which promptly starts vomiting apocalyptic light from the center as a demonic Cortana messes with his brain. Curious, no?

Snake looking as wrinkly as week-old custard, pointing a gun down his throat. Will he pull the trigger? What on earth is he thinking? And since when did whiney girly-boy Raiden become a mech-chopping robot-ninja?



One last punishment I must endure.

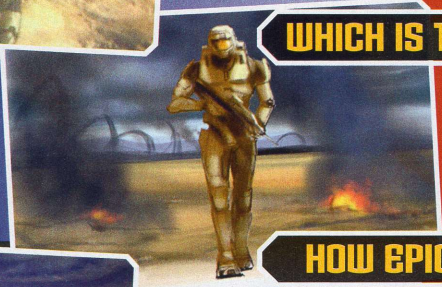
IF LOOKS COULD KILL?



A nasty flesh wound. Real time reflections in the helmet and scarred body armour are all well and good, and the scale of the trailer is immense, but is it that big a leap forward?

This'd be fatal. Hugely detailed character models and environments and a brooding art style. Sure, it's mainly because we've been shown more, but we reckon the finished article will be pretty close.

WHICH IS THE COOLEST?



Master Chief has always been pretty damn cool – not an easy task when you've got a three inch visor welded to your face – and that Forerunner relic does look absolutely awesome.

Ah, Kojima, how you tease us with your blockbuster-style trailer and stunning character designs. And the Raiden fight at the end? Surely you can't get much cooler than that.

HOW EPIC WILL IT BE?

You need *exactly* three parts to be truly epic – with the final one delivering the goodies. There's no doubting we'll be in for one hell of a battle on earth and *hmm-hmm*, gotta love that choral soundtrack...

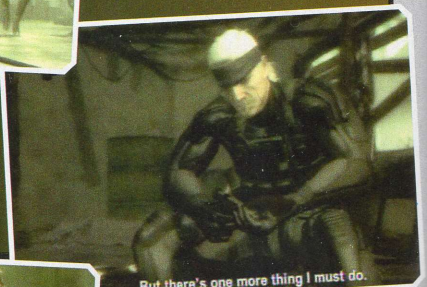
War has changed.

You can't really call *Metal Gear* a sweeping epic – but Kojima's obviously pulling out all the stops here. Haunting music, wind-swept ruined cities, and heavy on the artistic stylings.

HERO TOUGHNESS!

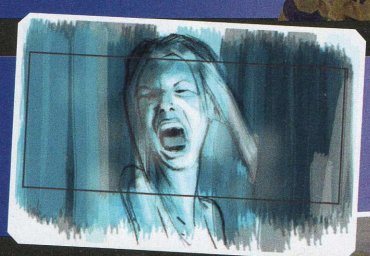
You really wouldn't want to mess around with MC – especially seeing as he's slaughtered his way through countless alien races across half the galaxy, but then he *is* armour plated. And he's *half robot*. Handy.

He might be all about sneaking and hiding and cupboards, but he doesn't need any namby-pamby body armour, is pretty much always on his own and he's survived more *games* than MC too.



But there's one more thing I must do.

WHAT ABOUT THE LADIES?

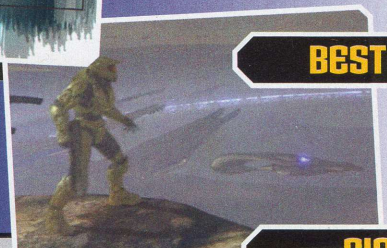


Cortana? You're kidding right? Sure, she might be kinda foxy-looking for an AI construct, but she doesn't technically exist, and anyway, she's been posessed by the Gravemind and is probably, um... *mental*.

We are the new FOXHOUND.

Ah, Meryl! How you teased us with your swaggering bottom-hugging combats. How you blushed when we stared at you for, like, half an hour. And you're back! Back, for another dose of violence! Good girl.

BEST BITS SO FAR



Just the sheer size of the Forerunner relic in the desert and the hundreds of Covenant ships flying overhead. Other than that, there's really been nothing in the way of action.

Snake's camouflage suit looks brilliant. Those half-organic mechs look pretty nasty (we can't wait to chop their chicken-like legs off) and *that* Raiden fight is truly incredible.

War has changed.

FINAL SCORE!

4/5 There's something about the third part in a trilogy. Finishing 'the fight' and then taking it online months after release means it'll be huge, but right now, we don't know much about it. Not enough to get truly, really, *hugely* excited.

It looks beautiful, there's no doubt about it, and true to form, Kojima is taking it in a very interesting direction rather than giving us more of the same. And if past trailers are anything to go by, the finished game will look *incredible*. **5/5**

A WHEEL WARTHOG

Remember the first time you hopped upon a Warthog in *Halo* and raced around mowing down Covenant troops under those big-ass Pirelli tyres? Best. Feeling. Ever. Obviously big fans of Master Chief's road rage antics, car makers Peugeot have been inspired to come up with the ultimate concept car – this meaty dune buggy! The resemblance is uncanny. Put us down for three, monsieurs…

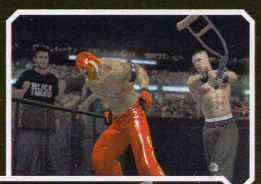
BEST LEGO

With LEGO having finally made all our Star Wars fantasies flesh…well, *plastic*, anyway, *GM* was blown away to discover piccies of LEGO *Resident Evil* characters floating around online! The likes of Chris Redfield, Jill Valentine, Barry Burton, Albert Wesker, Leon Kennedy and a zombified Brad Vickers were all lovingly replicated. Only one problem though… they're all fan fakes! A top idea nevertheless, they're worth a look – just Google "*Resident Evil* Lego"…

10 THINGS YOU DIDN'T KNOW ABOUT WWE SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007

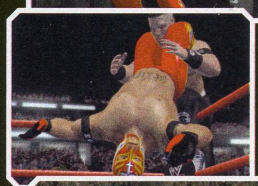
Say hello to Hiromi Furuta (left) and Taka Chihaya (right) from Yuke's!

Oliver Hurley put the genius coders at Yuke's in a particular nasty side headlock, until they agreed to give us the exclusive inside story on the latest incarnation of the best wrestling series *ever*...



1 THE PSP VERSION WILL INCLUDE ALL THE MAIN FEATURES OF THE CONSOLE VERSIONS

Taka Chihaya (Yokohama studio senior director, Yuke's): "The presentation can't be as nice on the lower-end machines but we do have the same features. If you look at the fighting in the crowd area for example, we have fewer 'smart' crowd members on PSP but the feature is still there."



2 SQUEEZING IN ALL THE ANIMATIONS AND SOUND IS THE HARDEST PART OF MAKING THE GAME

Hiromi Furuta (Senior vice president and SmackDown! producer, Yuke's): "We're already stuffed to the gills on PS2. And then we have all these new animations to get in and two-and-a-half hours of people talking, plus 28 varieties of each of the player voices. Finding room for all that is very difficult."

3 ALL OF THE MOTION CAPTURE IS DONE USING WRESTLERS YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF

Colin Mack (SmackDown! project manager, THQ): "We do mo-cap with wrestlers from 'developmental league' Ohio Valley Wrestling, which trains people for WWE. So you get the guys who are up-and-coming. So it's not like we say, 'Hey, Triple H, come over and do some mo-cap' – he's a little too busy to do that."

4 YUKE'S DIDN'T KNOW WHAT THEY WERE DOING WHEN THE MADE THE FIRST SMACKDOWN!

TC: "We just looked at all these WWE tapes and whatever we thought was cool we put in the game. We just made a game that we thought would be fun for ourselves. *SmackDown! 2* was the first year where we tried to understand what western gamers like."

5 YUKE'S ONLY FOUND OUT THAT THE NEW PS3 PAD WON'T INCLUDE RUMBLE WHEN *GAMESMASTER* TOLD THEM!

TC: "Wow, that stinks. In a lot of games, the use of vibration can add so much. You walk around somewhere like E3 and the floor's vibrating with bombs going off and stuff. It can really add a lot to a game to have vibration, so I'm kind of disappointed there won't be vibration in the controller."

6 EVEN THOUGH EACH GAME ISN'T RELEASED UNTIL NOVEMBER, THE ROSTER HAS TO BE FINALISED IN APRIL

CM: "It starts getting scary around March or so because we've done all the obvious ones like Triple H, Kurt Angle and John Cena and then we'll get into that mid-range of the roster where we really don't know who will be there in November. We generally finish off the roster in about April."

7 THERE AREN'T MORE COSTUMES FOR EACH CHARACTER AS IT TAKES TOO MUCH TIME

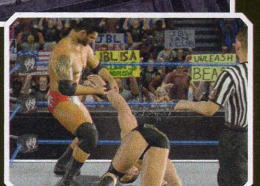
HF: "We have four platforms now, so there are four versions of every model we have to make. In the first *SmackDown!* it took a week to make a character and now it takes four weeks. We'd love to have more costumes but we only have a year for each game."

8 THE WWE WON'T LET PLAYERS MODIFY EXISTING CHARACTERS

CM: "The characters have to look like the WWE wants them to. The WWE will tell us, 'No, it's got to be like that, this is the costume he uses,' so we can't do stuff like let people modify the real superstars, unfortunately."

9 BURNOUT IS AN INFLUENCE!

TC: "Games like *Burnout* don't go that far down the 'real' route – they just get in some funny, crazy kind of fun stuff. So that's something we're constantly thinking about, because just making the models more real is good but you also have to get fun in there."



10 THEY'RE ALREADY THINKING ABOUT DEVELOPING A WWE GAME FOR WII

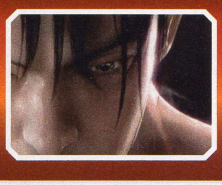
CM: "Of course we've thought about that. We have no official plans but we can talk about possibilities... Hiromi and Taka went over to the Nintendo booth at E3, saw the controllers, played around with it a bit and went, 'Mmmm'. So that's the state we're at right now."

WWE SmackDown! vs. Raw 2007 will be released for PSP, PS2, PS3 and Xbox 360 in November!

100% NEW!

ADRIANO-RO

He's Inter Milan's striker supreme and heir to Ronaldo's striking crown for Brazil. Who is he? Adriano of course! He's teaming up with Konami as the face of *PES6*. The goateed one was chuffed, spouting: "*Pro Evolution Soccer 6* is the most realistic football game around, known worldwide for its quality and I am delighted to be associated with such a fine series." Well said, that man.



TEKKEN TILT

Tekken 6 might be one of the first titles to use PS3 tilt-tech. Producer Katsuhiro Harada reportedly voiced the idea that players were able to shake the PS3 controller to free their character from a stranglehold. Secondly, Sony is reportedly developing a gel-based controller that shifts form as you play. That'll be one in the eye for Wii!

BIG POKE-FUN!

Pokemon hit Wii and DS! Hurrah!

At last, *Pokemon* news has begun leaking out of Japan on Nintendo's two new projects – *Pokemon Diamond* and *Pearl* on DS and *Pokemon Battle Revolution* on Wii.

First up – the two games will be compatible. You'll be able to upload your captured Pokemon from *Diamond/Pearl* and battle in beautiful 3D on your Wii. The DS version will also work with the Wii's Connect24 online service, which means you'll be able to trade and battle with other players from all over the world.

Diamond and *Pearl* will have a whole host of new features, like differences between male and female Pokemon and loads of new info in the Pokedex, including height and weight comparisons. Tasty!

In motion, *Pokemon Battle Revolution* looks the business, shiny and lovely.

MORE BRAWLING

Super Smash Bros Fight on...

The E3 announcement and trailer of the Wii's *Super Smash Bros Brawl* more than whet our appetite for fighting the likes of Wario and – believe it! – Solid Snake. Some more new shots have emerged this month – check them out!

It's Pit from *Kid Icarus!* Old-time gamers will know who he is...

This is *Metroid's* Samus in her Zero Suit, ready to kick ass!

Looks like Snake's going to have some kind of appropriate stealth attack.

grand theft auto IV

THE WORD ON THE STREET!

After Microsoft's E3 bombshell confirmed that *GTA4 is* in development, *GM's* spies have managed to uncover the following snippets of *GTA4* related info.

- It'll be out on 360 and PS3 on October 17th, 2007.
- Get ready for on-going episodic updates via the majesty of Xbox live.
- Rockstar President Dan Houser and *GTA/Manhunt* veteran James Worrall have been confirmed as principal writers, with Navid Khonsari (*Max Payne 2*) helping out.
- Lazlow Jones (*GTA 3/Vice City*) is also set to feature, possibly in a vocal/production capacity.
- And that's about it for the mo! Stay tuned for our new monthly *GTA4* gossip column – if it's in the game, we'll be the first to tell you about it!

NEW STUFF

Gaming gadgets and gizmos galore! Check 'em out...

PYRAMAT SOUND ROCKER

Plugging into any present or next-gen console, prepare for an assault on your senses like never before. Part chair, part speaker – all fun!

A huge sub lets you feel every footfall, shot and death cry, immersing you in the action. It's even easily wipe down-able if a session on *Resi 4* gets... er, *a little out of hand*. It's not only gaming that the Sound Rocker caters for though – you can also plug your telly, DVD and MP3 player in.

Reasonably stylish (if you're into pongy grey rubber) proper comfy and – best of all – it'll fold neatly away and thus avoid you getting an ear-bashing from your other half for mucking up the lounge's Feng Shui.

FROM: Pyramat
CONTACT: www.widget.co.uk
PRICE: £149.99

SENNHEISER PC150 BINAURAL HEADSET

If you're the kind of PC gamer whose perfect evening is spent either jabbering with your mates as you plan a *World of Warcraft* raid or screaming abuse at American teenagers during a fanatic session of *Counter-Strike*, you might want to have a look at this headset.

Perfect for gaming, laptop use, voice recognition, Internet telephony, VoIP, CD, MP3, DVD, and with a top quality noise-cancelling microphone, PC owners will wonder how they ever lived without them...

FROM: Sennheiser
CONTACT: www.sennheiser.co.uk
PRICE: £59.99

SHURE E2G SOUND ISOLATING EARPHONES: GAMING EDITION

Along with Etymotic and their fab ER6 Isolator earphones (reviewed in *GM*170), Shure are *GM's* brand of choice when it comes to portable gaming audio heaven.

The difference in quality between these tweaked-for-gamers babies and a bog-standard set of PSP or iPod earbuds just can't be measured in mere words, so if you're the kind of audiophile who demands peak performance whether you're jamming in the recording studio or simply playing *Liberty City Stories* on the bus, make these your essential purchase this month.

FROM: Shure
CONTACT: www.shure.com
PRICE: £79.99

JOYSTICK JUNKIES T-SHIRTS

If you're a bit of a fashion whore and dig retro gaming, do we have a treat for you! Inspired by classic videogames – like *Space Invaders, Gauntlet, Defender* and *Sensible Soccer* – Joystick Junkies have whipped up a range of stylish T-shirts for the fashion market, pre-shrunk and sporting super soft vintage washes. In other words, they're well up there with Diesel and Firetrap.

Joystick Junkies gear doesn't come cheap, but for this price you're getting high fashion, and top quality goods that'll profess your love of gaming to the entire world *and* attract the opposite sex!

FROM: Joystick Junkies
CONTACT: www.joystickjunkies.com
PRICE: £24.99

FREE* GAME

for your mobile phone!

Ghosts, cars and trucks – there's something for everyone in this mad mobile giveaway!

You Play We Pay!

FREE Mobile game brought to you by... GAMES MASTER Britain's Best Games Mag

CASPER IN MIDNIGHT MANSION

Play as both Casper and Wendy in this spook-tacular puzzle game! It's Halloween and the evil Witch Weevil has kidnapped Wendy, The Good Little Witch. Evil Weevil plans to cast a spell at the stroke of midnight that will strip little Wendy of her beauty and leave her horribly disfigured! You must use Casper and Wendy's skills together to solve puzzles, collect the power spells to defeat Weevil, and escape the mansion before the clock hits midnight!

iFONE

Casper's got his work cut out if he wants to save Wendy the Good Little Witch!

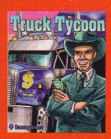
CRASH N' BURN TURBO

Crash 'n' Burn Turbo is a petrol-soaked, powerslidin', doughnuttin', 400-watt subwoofer slice of street racing. Choose your car, personalize it, then get out there and race it! Cause carnage as you race around 16 different tracks. You can customize one of three different snarlin' racing cars and race it in six different championships. Smash and slam your opponents and leave them trailing in a cloud of Nitro smoke!

eidos

Rubber-burning racing is the order of the day in *Crash N' Burn Turbo!*

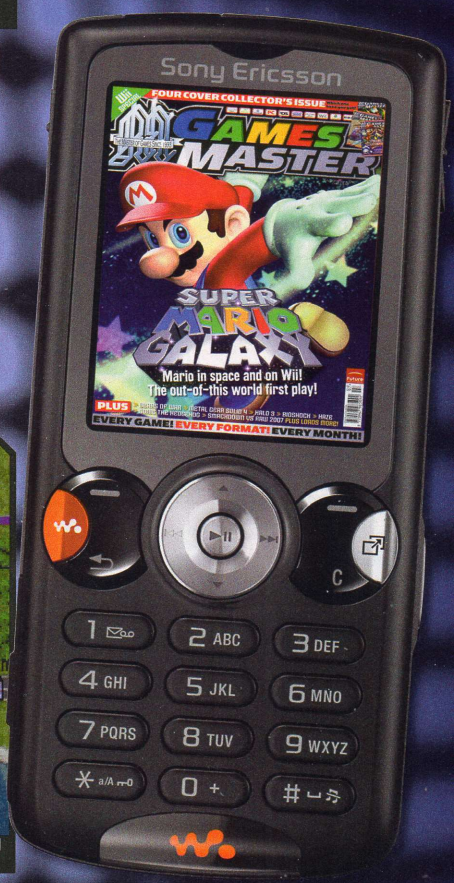
TRUCK TYCOON



Build your own trucking empire in this massive strategy game. You'll need to build, expand, and manage your empire across large terrains and make a healthy profit by transporting all sorts of goods. Buy trucks and lay new roads to expand the power of your trucking empire. Build and enhance cities to increase your wealth! The game features 10 huge scenarios and a free play mode in which you can decide your own destiny!

Lunagames

You'll need a good business head to succeed in the mighty *Truck Tycoon!*

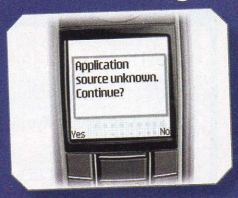


Just choose one of the 3 titles listed then text MAST to 62344. Check out the 'how it works' panel for more information. It's easy!

How it works:

Just follow these simple steps to your FREE* mobile game!

Just text MAST to 62344. We'll send you a completely FREE message containing the link you need to download the GAMESMASTER service.



Say 'Yes' if prompted to download the service. Download problems? Check out 'Frequently Asked Questions' at www.mad4games.com

Use the service to check compatibility, choose your free game, and get access to hot content, compos and news whenever you want.

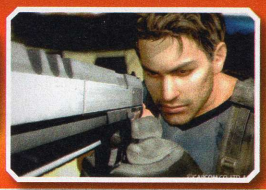
No Subscriptions! No Worries!

No need to worry about sneaky subscriptions; there aren't any! The GAMESMASTER browser makes sure you only get games that work on YOUR phone.

TERMS & CONDITIONS: Usage of the GamesMaster browser service is subject to GPRS coverage, handset capability and network availability. A full list of compatible handsets is published in the FAQ at www.mad4games.com. At peak times, SMS traffic may be subject to network delay. Your phone must be WAP enabled and able to run Java games. Once connected, the service will check product compatibility with your phone. If you need assistance on connection or other issues, text HELP to 62344. *We do NOT charge you for the service, but usage requires a short WAP and/or data connection for which your operator may charge at your normal rate. Casper the Friendly Ghost © 2005 Harvey Entertainment, inc. CASPER and all Harvey characters, their logos, names and related indicia are trademarks of Harvey Entertainment, Inc. All Rights Reserved. Produced and published by iFone under licence from Classic Media. Crash 'n' Burn, Eidos and the Eidos logo, are registered trademarks of the Eidos Group of Companies. Mobile version developed and published by Macrospace Ltd. Truck Tycoon © 2006 Lunagames International. All rights reserved. By using the service, you agree to abide by the terms and conditions published therein and at www.mad4g.com. Offer expires 08/08/06.

MAD 4 GAMES

100% NEW!



CAPCOM!

Want to know the *real* reason why we saw neither *Resident Evil 5* or *Devil May Cry 4* at E3? Well, according to Capcom it's because the we'll see of either game will be at this year's Tokyo Game Show – where they'll *both* be playable on the show floor!

UBI GET LOST

It's the show that *everybody's* talking about, so it was only a matter of time (like *24*) before desert island thrillathon *Lost* got the game treatment. "That they (Touchstone Television) have chosen us is the best homage that a producer can make to the creativity of Ubisoft." spewed Ubisoft's Yves Guillemot. Fingers crossed whatever form the game eventually takes will involve lots of Kate-related bikini action. It's expected in 2007.

UK Top 20 Games Chart

The roar of the Three Lions echoes across the charts as *World Cup* fever takes gaming by storm! Ta-ta, Lara...

GM uses the ChartTrack chart – the only chart officially recognised by the UK software industry. Get the full 20 in *GM* every month!

ChartTrack

IT'S THE ONLY CHART THAT COUNTS!

NO.		Previous positions: Last week	2 weeks ago	3 weeks ago	GAME	PUBLISHER	GM'S SCORE	GM JUDGEMENTS
1		1	1	1	FIFA World Cup PS2 XBOX CUBE 360 PC DS GBA	EA	82%	More than just a top game – this is a spectacular *event*, and a blinding return to form for flailing *FIFA*.
2		4	16	17	Pro Evolution Soccer 5 PS2 XBOX PC PSP GOLD AWARD	Konami	95%	Takes the beautiful game to a whole new level of evolution. Just champion.
3		2	2	2	Lara Croft Tomb Raider: Legend PS2 XBOX PC 360	Eidos	88%	This re-establishes *TR* where it should be: on shopping lists and in our hearts.
4		7	5	4	Animal Crossing: Wild World DS GOLD AWARD	Nintendo	92%	One of Ninty's best ideas – and now it comes with you to the shops. *Nintendogs* is history.
5		3	10	20	Championship Manager 2006 PSP PC	Eidos	78%	Surpasses the original *Champ Man* on PSP, but still eclipsed by *Football Manager*.
6	NEW	-	-	-	X-Men: the Official Game PS2 XBOX CUBE 360	Activision	54%	Predictable action game that fails to excite or exploit the great characters at its disposal.
7		6	3	11	Ghost Recon: Advanced Warfighter PS2 XBOX 360	Ubisoft	89%	Looks great, plays great – once you're used to the clunky control system, that is.
8		8	11	13	The Sims 2: Family Fun Stuff PC	EA	72%	Not the step up on the consoles as it was on the PC – overall, a bit disappointing.
9		10	7	5	Ice Age 2: The Meltdown PS2 XBOX CUBE PC DS GBA	Vivendi	75%	New ideas? Not really. Sparkling platform fun? The ice has it.
10		5	4	6	The Godfather PS2 XBOX PC	EA	69%	Don't buy this! A *GTA* wannabe as bloated as Marlon Brando's cheeks, and five times as ugly.
11		9	8	9	FIFA Street 2 PS2 XBOX DS PSP	EA	80%	A casual gamer's dream, but seasoned footy veterans will take more convincing than this.
12	NEW	-	-	-	The Da Vinci Code PS2 XBOX CUBE	2K Games	63%	Enjoyable movie spin-off due to the puzzles, but also because it's so bad it's good.
13		16	15	3	Football Manager 2006 360 PSP PC GOLD AWARD	Sega	90%	*FM 2006* is the best footie sim by a mile. This is one management game you shouldn't miss.
14		12	12	8	The Elder Scrolls 4: Oblivion PC 360	Take 2	93%	It's been a slow few years for the single-player RPG. This makes up for all of it.
15		13	9	10	Buzz! The Big Quiz PS2	Sony	58%	A cute idea, but the actual execution is unforgivably cynical and lacklustre. Buzz off.
16		19	21	25	Fight Night: Round 3 PS2 360 GOLD AWARD	EA	90%	Like sports? Like hitting people? Like *games*? Then you'll probably like this.
17	NEW	-	—	RE	Urban Chaos: Riot Response PS2 XBOX	Eidos	81%	The action never lets up and the bullets never run out. It's not subtle but it is fun.
18		15	13	12	The Sims 2 PS2 PC DS PSP	EA	N/A	Not a game as such - just loads of furniture, clothing, and décor to prettify your Sims world.
19		17	17	16	King Kong: Official Game of the Movie PS2 XBOX PSP DS	Ubisoft	78%	Big, hairy, scary – but basically one level stretched out over 40. Dis-ape-ointing.
20		20	-	-	Monster Hunter: Freedom PSP	Capcom	73%	It should be online: simple as that. With just a few people in your vicinity, it's no monster.

Software charts compiled by ChartTrack, ©2005 ELSPA (UK) Ltd. www.elspa.com Words: Rob Taylor

01 FIFA WORLD CUP

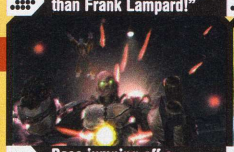
We're not sure if a combination of all that lager, face paint and scantily clad Brazilian Samba babes has turned us all soft in the head, but we genuinely can't get enough of EA's latest kickabout. Whether it actually plays a more satisfying game of footy than *PES* is still open to debate, but for once *GM* is more than happy to recommend a spot of *FIFA*. Ole!

"Ste Gerrard, he's better than Frank Lampard!"

Argentina hoist the cup aloft, and a nation weeps.

06 X-MEN: THE OFFICIAL GAME

Whatever you think about the latest flick (we thought it was ace), this hackneyed effort harks back to the bad old days when films tie-ins clogged up the charts like a Hollywood-sized hairball. Wolverine, Nightcrawler, Iceman... all that potential, put to even less use than poor Professor X's legs. We guess the real question is... just why did you lot go out and buy it?

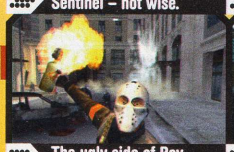


Base jumping off a Sentinel – not wise.

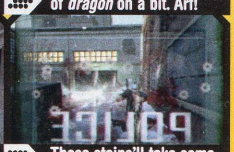
Critics accused the game of *dragon* on a bit. Arf!

17 URBAN CHAOS: RIOT RESPONSE

We always though lumping around a shield was a bit of a pain – give us a two-handed broadsword anyday. But in *Urban Chaos* we came to rely on our shield, as time and again it saved our scrawny hides from all kinds of machete, gun and fire-related pain. Most importantly, it also taught us that shields can be used as weapons – THUNK! Argh! THUNK! Alee! Oh yes, shields are ace.



The ugly side of Rey Mysterio reveals itself...



Those stains'll take some elbow grease to shift.

JAPAN CHARTS

Tetris and Brain Training are just the ticket for our Far East friends.

1	Tetris DS
2	Kahashima Ryuuta Kyouju Kanshuu: DS
3	World Soccer Winning Eleven 10 PS2
4	Kahashima Ryuuta Kyouju Kanshuu: DS
5	Animal Crossing: Wild World DS
6	Pokemon Rangers: Diamond-Pearl eno Michi DS
7	Eigoga Nigatena Otona no DS Training: Eigo Zuke DS
8	Mario Kart DS DS
9	Mother 3 GBA
10	Dragon Quest PS2

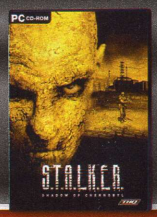
US CHARTS

It's a Mario mania! The dungaree-clad one leaps to top spot.

1	New Super Mario Bros DS
2	Brain Age DS
3	Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion 360 PC
4	World of Warcraft PC
5	Heroes of Might & Magic 5 PC
6	Kingdom Hearts 2 PS2
7	The Sims 2 PC
8	Duel Masters PS2
9	God of War PS2
10	Kingdom Hearts PS2

SNOW MELTS AWAY

Controversial drug dealing actioner *Snow* was conspicuous by its absence at E3, and now publisher Take Two has finally confirmed that the project has been canned. *GM* doesn't doubt that the US media and public outcry over *GTA: San Andreas's* infamous Hot Coffee mod and a reluctance to offend America's moral majority likely lie behind the decision. Not that we care really... *Snow* was a rubbish idea anyway. More importantly, *what's happened to Bully?*



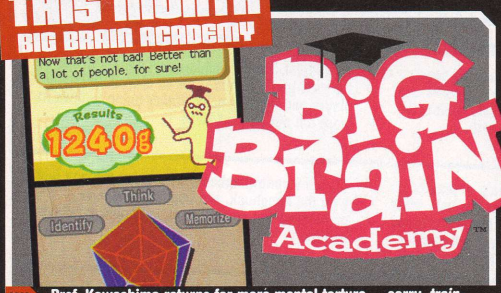
S.T.A.L.K.E.R. M.I.A.?

With a development time of over five years, the monstrously hyped and massively ambitious free-roaming FPS *S.T.A.L.K.E.R* is now right up there with other celebrated vapourware like *Duke Nukem Forever.* Anxious to inform fans just what the *heck* is going on, devs GSC Game World ventured onto their forums to discuss their 'problem child' and quell concerns that the game was going belly up. And that release date? Sometime in early 2007...

WATCH OUT FOR...

Look out for these latest games to hit the shelves...

THIS MONTH
BIG BRAIN ACADEMY

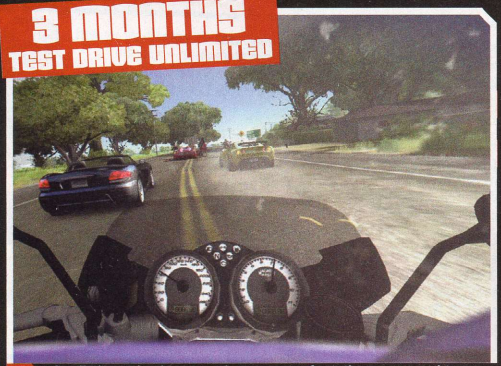


Prof. Kawashima returns for more mental torture... sorry, *training.* Not that our pea-sized brains have made us bitter...

NEXT MONTH
KINGDOM HEARTS 2

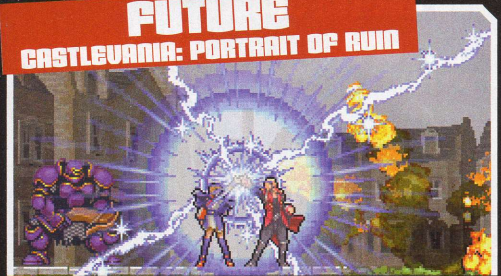
Spiky Sora returns to re-ignite old friendships with Mickey, Goofy and the *FFVII* gang in Square's inspired cartoon adventure.

3 MONTHS
TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED



Atari's beast is almost ready to emerge from the garage and tear up Hawaii. Have you downloaded the demo from Xbox Live yet?

FUTURE
CASTLEVANIA: PORTRAIT OF RUIN



Drac's back – again! Only this time we're promised new DS-specific features and a WWII setting.

Cut it out and stick it on the wall

JULY

7TH	World Golf Tour PS2 XBOX PSP PC	Oxygen
7TH	Alex Rider: Stormbreaker GBA DS	THQ
7TH	Big Brain Academy DS	Nintendo
7TH	Cars PS2 PC PSP CUBE DS GBA	THQ
9TH	Earache Extreme Metal Racing PSP PS2 PC	Metrod3D
14TH	Prey PC 360	2K games
16TH	The Lord of the Rings: Battle for Middle-earth 2 360	EA
18TH	Valkyrie Profile: Lenneth PSP	Square Enix
21ST	Def Jam Fight for NY: The Takeover PSP	EA
21ST	Jaws Unleashed PS2 XBOX PC	THQ
28TH	World of Pool PSP	Ghostlight
28TH	America's Army: Rise of a Soldier PS2 XBOX	Ubisoft

AUGUST

1ST	Veggie Tales: LarryBoy and the Bad Apple GBA PS2	Crave
1ST	Dirge of Cerberus: Final Fantasy 7 PS2	Square Enix
4TH	Monster House PS2 CUBE DS GBA	THQ
11TH	Age of Empires: The Age of Kings DS	THQ
25TH	ParaWorld PC	Deep Silver
25TH	Spin Out PSP	Ghostlight
25TH	Paces of War PC	Ubisoft
25TH	Phantasy Star Universe PS2 PC	Sega
25TH	Dynasty Warriors DS	Koei
25TH	The Ant Bully PS2 CUBE PC GBA	Midway
25TH	Mortal Kombat: Unchained PSP	Midway
25TH	Kingdom Hearts 2 PS2	Square Enix
25TH	World of Warcraft: The Burning Crusade PC	Blizzard

SEPTEMBER

1ST	Saint's Row 360	THQ
1ST	World Tour Soccer 2 PSP	Sony
15TH	Hi Hi Puffy Ami Yumi: The Genie and the Amp DS	D3
15TH	Dead Rising 360	Capcom
15TH	Broken Sword: The Angel of Death PC	THQ
22ND	Company of Heroes PC	THQ
29TH	Splinter Cell: Double Agent PS2 XBOX CUBE PC 360	Ubisoft
29TH	Test Drive Unlimited 360	Atari
29TH	The Godfather 360	EA

OCTOBER

13TH	Warlords Champions DS PSP	D3
20TH	GTA: Vice City Stories PSP	Rockstar
TBC	Alone in the Dark 360 PC	Atari
TBC	Crackdown 360	Microsoft
TBC	Destroy All Humans! 2 PS2 XBOX	THQ
TBC	GUN Showdown PSP	Activision
TBC	Just Cause PS2 XBOX PC 360	Eidos
TBC	LEGO Star Wars 2: The Original Trilogy PS2 CUBE GBA PC DS PSP	LucasArts
TBC	Mortal Kombat: Armageddon PS2 XBOX	Midway
TBC	Warhammer: Mark of Chaos PC	Namco

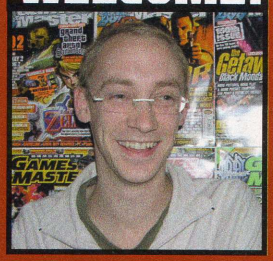
NOVEMBER

1ST	Castlevania: Portrait of Ruin DS	Konami
3RD	Gears of War 360	Epic
24TH	Silent Hill Origins PSP	Konami
TBA	The Legend of Zelda: Twilight Princess CUBE Wii	Capcom

Heed Our Warning:
Here at *GM* we endeavour to bring you the most accurate release dates around. But the games industry is a fickle beast so bear in mind that the info above is constantly on the move. If it doesn't come out when we say it does, blame someone else!

GMOST WA MGAMES

WELCOME!



E3's over, Nintendo and Sony have shown their hand and the floodgates have opened. We've been drowned in a raging torrent of top-quality games. New heroes, familiar faces, stunning sequels and ruddy great handfuls of brand spanking new games are all hungry for your cash – so we thought we'd shake things up a bit. Give you a nice and easy intro to sort out the stars of the future from the time-wasting no-hopers bearing down on us like a tidal wave of gaming sewage...

To your right you'll see the top ten games we reckon are going to be sure-fire winners. The cream of the crop, if you will. On top of that we've picked out our own personal favourites, as well as anything else we thought you might find a little bit interesting.

Oh, you'll also notice a 'Your Most Wanted' box on the opposite page. Let us know what games you're looking for, and it'll help us fill the mag with more of the stuff *you* want. Get to it!

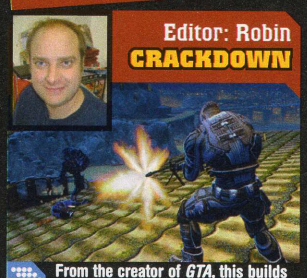
Geraint, Deputy Editor

THE 10 HOTTEST GAMES OF TOMORROW!

	THE GAME	WHAT IS IT?	WHAT WE'VE GOT	WHY WE WANT IT
1	GEARS OF WAR	Third-person, squad-based shooter that sees you blasting gooey craters into unpleasant subterranean freaklings.	No new shots since our huge preview a couple of months ago, but we've had plenty of time to play it – see page 18.	No contest. This is hands-down the big daddy of the next-gen shooters – we've played the multi-player and it rocks bells. *Halo's* going to have its work cut out against this.
2	SUPER MARIO GALAXY	The 'proper' Mario sequel we've all been waiting for – this time taking place in space!	Plenty of play hours under our belt, that's what! Fingers crossed we'll get another look real soon.	The new control scheme where you run and jump with the nunchuck, and use the remote to manipulate the environment, is simple, unalloyed genius.
3	ZELDA: TWILIGHT PRINCESS	The latest in the *Zelda* series. This one promises to be the best and most epic instalment yet.	NEW SHOTS! Praise be! They're good 'uns too. Of Hyrule field and everything. They've even funked up the Twilight World! Result!	The release of a new *Zelda* is among the most important date on any self-respecting gamer's calander. This can't come soon enough. And we've only got to wait 'til November!
4	ASSASSIN'S CREED	Medieval stealth-action from the people who brought you the original (and best) *Prince of Persia: Sands of Time.*	Some lovely new shots and info, expanding on our first play at E3 last month. Luck old you.	Something of a surprise, this. The great setting and interesting ideas mean that this is one of the more promising third-party games.
5	METAL GEAR SOLID 4	Part four of the original stealth-action game.	Only what we showed you last month – if you've not seen the stunning trailer though, head to www.konami.jp/kojima_pro/e3_2006.	It's probably the PS3's most important game, with production values that rival a summer blockbuster. It's going to be HUGE! And that's something of an understatement, you understand.
6	HALO 3	The third part of arguably the best FPS series ever – this time with Master Chief taking the fight to planet Earth.	Other than the trailer now available on 360's Marketplace and a *very* itchy trigger finger? Not much else...	Other than the incredible-looking *Gears of War*, this is the daddy of all 360 games. Expect the world to stand still when it's eventually released.
7	grand theft auto IV	The ultimate free-roaming crime spree. Steal cars, cruise the streets listening to the radio, and mess up innocent civilians real nice. *Real* nice.	There's a logo and nothing else - no shots, no details, nothing. We are trying though, promise. And the release date is October 19th 2007! Blimey.	Apparently, it's going to be released on 360 and PS3 at the same time, which can only be a good thing for everyone concerned, right?
8	GOD OF WAR 2	The sequel to last year's epic slasher, where Kratos gets to hurt a load more people.	More gruesome shots of Kratos, giving it some with his fiery, meat-cleaving chain. We really need to get ourselves one of those babies. They look like fun!	The first one was an amazingly violent cinematic masterpiece – and the prospect of an even better installment really gets our juices going.
9	SMACKDOWN VS RAW 2007	Princess has to skip her way across fairyland to rescue a cherry muffin from an evil baker. Oh, come on, as if you didn't know already!	We've managed to get an interview with developers, Yuke's. You can read all about how the game's getting on over on page 13. Go now! Go on!	Shinier lycra trousers, sweatier foreheads and bloodier, er, blood. Make no mistake, this is shaping up very nicely indeed.
10	VIVA PINATA	Amusing-looking, super-cute garden-'em-up that lets you make your own leafy habitat to attract a variety of papier mache critters.	Some more lovely screens of freak-eyed pinatas gambolling in the gardens. We've gone gooey.	In a world wheere every other 360 game involves a man with a helmet shooting a gun, this will be a breath of flower-scented fresh air.

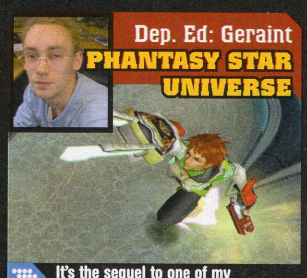
TEAM PICKS

And as for the games Team *GM* are personally excited about?



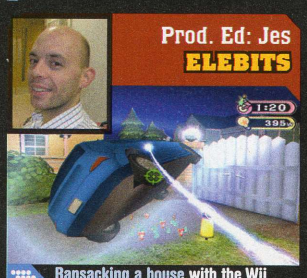
Editor: Robin
CRACKDOWN

From the creator of *GTA*, this builds on the best bit of *GTA* – freedom!



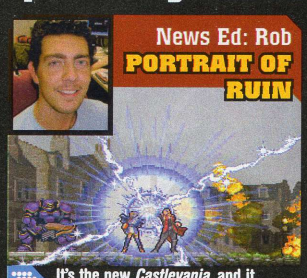
Dep. Ed: Geraint
PHANTASY STAR UNIVERSE

It's the sequel to one of my favourite games ever!



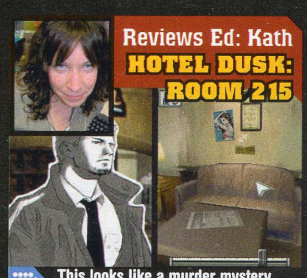
Prod. Ed: Jes
ELEBITS

Ransacking a house with the Wii controller is heart-bursting fun.



News Ed: Rob
PORTRAIT OF RUIN

It's the new *Castlevania*, and it takes place during World War 2!



Reviews Ed: Kath
HOTEL DUSK: ROOM 215

This looks like a murder mystery weekend without the bad acting.

NTED

WHO IS... SILVER?

The heroes of the future! NOW!

WHERE'S HE FROM?
The future! Whether he's actually Sonic from the future, though, we don't really know.

WHAT'S HIS MOTIVATION?
Short answer? Don't know. He could be good. He could be evil. We reckon he swings both ways.

SPECIAL POWERS?
He commands psychic and telekinetic powers, allowing him to stop bullets in mid-air, bend metal using the power of his brain, and even hover. He's like a furry, time-travelling Magneto.

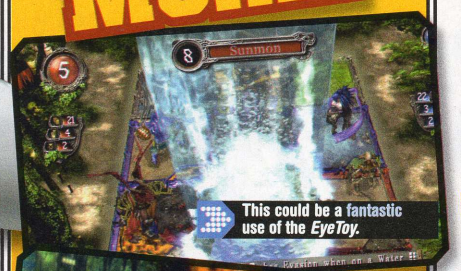
WEAKNESSES?
He can't do spin attacks or double jumps. What a lamer. Cough.

ANYTHING ELSE?
Chest hair. Unusual.

SHOT OF THE MONTH

Just look at that! Link gallops across the all-new Hyrule field on Epona. It's so real we can almost smell the grass. Stunning!

TELL US MORE!



This could be a fantastic use of the *EyeToy*.

Conjure up a proper dragon from a humble card. Ace!

Well Card!

EYE OF JUDGEMENT

Yeah, we know what you're thinking – a card-battler. Great. But before you rip this page out and stuff it in your mouth, think about it. A unique *EyeToy* game that sees you conjuring up hologram beasties like that Chess-type game in the Millennium Falcon? We'll have some of that!

LEAST WANTED

We detect the whiff of crapulence. Beware!

RESERVOIR DOGS

Arriving almost 15 years late but taking liberties with the story (and looking last-gen to boot)? With stunt-filled driving sections? And run and gun 'psycho' sections where you murder anyone who gets in your way, you know, like in the films? Give over.

ONE TO WATCH

Our top tips for upcoming sleeper hits.

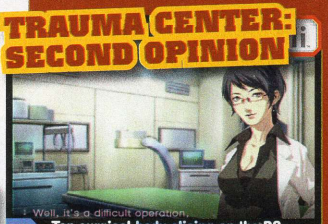
LOST PLANET

Our Kath reckons it's like 'Halo On Ice'. But with mechs. Riiiight.

ELITE BEAT AGENTS

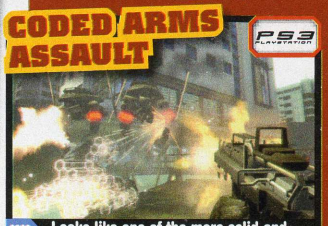
It's a mad-as-a badger rhythm action game, featuring horse racing.

TRAUMA CENTER: SECOND OPINION



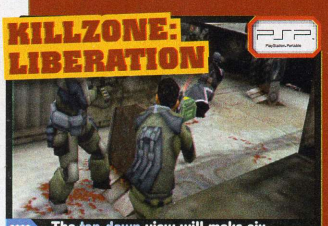
Top surgical body slicing on the DS, this'll rock the hospital on Wii.

CODED ARMS ASSAULT



Looks like one of the more solid and visually arresting shooters on PS3.

KILLZONE: LIBERATION



The top-down view will make six-player deathmatches a real winner.

YOUR MOST WANTED!

There are almost 200 new games looming on the horizon, so we'd like you to tell us your Most Wanted! Scribble down your top five and send it in to the address below and we'll scour the earth for your favourite games!

MY TOP 5

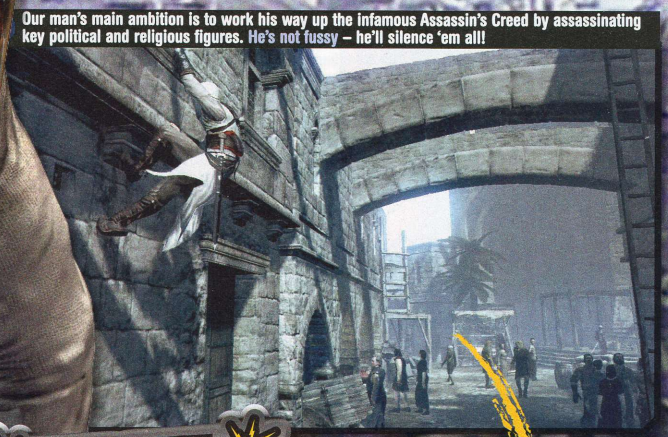
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

Send to: My Top Five!, GamesMaster Mag, Future, 30 Monmouth St, Bath , BA1 2BW
Or email: gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk

• OUT: TBA • DEVELOPER: UBISOFT MONTREAL • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT
• FORMAT: PS3 360

ASSASSIN'S CREED™

Two's company, three hundred's a crowd...



Our man's main ambition is to work his way up the infamous Assassin's Creed by assassinating key political and religious figures. He's not fussy – he'll silence 'em all!

UPDATE! We revel in the greatness of Ubisoft's latest classic

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?

Prince of Persia meets *Hitman* and the genre of 'social stealth' is born.

FACTS

- Blend into crowds that number into the hundreds
- Sprawling free-roaming medieval environments

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

Splinter Cell Chaos Theory	93%
Prince of Persia: Two Thrones	79%

The citizens of Acre get on with the business of living their everyday lives, unaware of creepy Altair observing them from the rooftops. Woo... it's enough to give us the shivers.

Dead Rising, Heavenly Sword, Ninety-Nine Nights and now this – seems we'll have to get used to being shoved and jostled during the next-gen revolution! Still, even though hundreds of on-screen characters seem to be the in thing, this stealthy blockbuster is looking like it'll more than stand out from the crowd...

There are three distinct parts to *Assassin's Creed* – planning, execution and, well, hotfooting it. To prepare for the hit it's often a good idea to seek a vantage point in the free-roaming environments and stalk your prey from above, clambering perilously atop the city walls before sweeping into the bustling crowds. And when we say free-roaming, we really mean it – if it juts out, chances are hero Altair can shimmy up it.

LAST CRUSADE

Once you're actually amongst the throng, it's vital to blend in. Any sudden movements or rash actions will have a noticeable impact upon others' perception and reactions towards Altair, so you've got to play it cool. Once you've finally located your victim, it's time to move in for the kill and finish the job...

Here's the twist: your prey isn't always as defenceless as you might suspect. Sure, you'll encounter the occasional coward, but others might be surrounded by posses of bodyguards – or even turn out to be as vicious and deadly as you! Some will need to be offed in full public gaze, while others reside in densely guarded inner sanctums. Just like in *Hitman*, each mission requires a unique approach if Altair is to succeed.

Despite his agility (you can control each limb independently), Altair will occasionally find himself with his back very much against the wall, cornered by foes from all sides. Our man relies more on counter-attacking than aggression, paving the way for some of the coolest scrapping since *The Two Thrones'* speedkills.

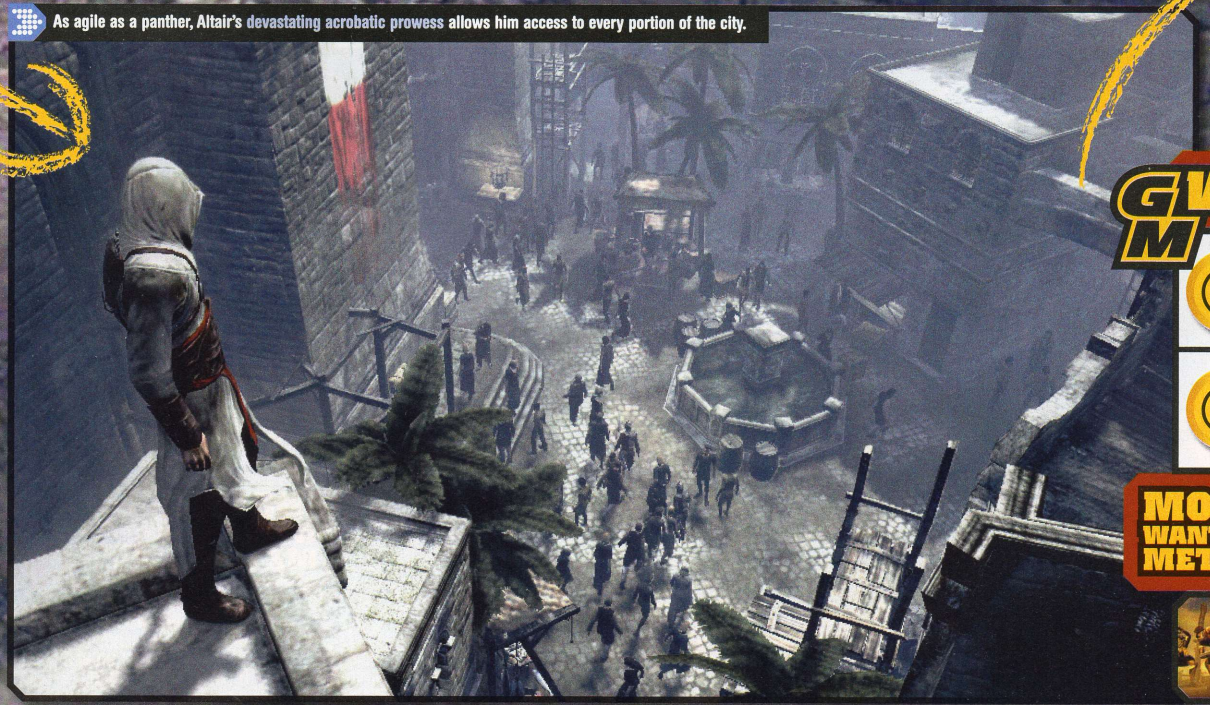
KILLING TIME

Altair boasts a style that's best described as a rudimentary mix of judo and street fighting. It emphasises speed, economy of movement and silence – much like a ninja, or even a medieval Sam Fisher, if you like.

Phew! So much excitement and potential – it's a pity, then, that *Assassin's Creed* is not out for another year at least. Still, it looks as if this might just be a *Prince of Persia*-sized smash, and it's possibly the most exciting thing on PS3 yet.

Whoosh! After all that planning and legwork, it's time to let out some pent-up aggression. Springing into action, Altair gets down to the grisly business of killing...

Lying in wait like a bird of prey, our man patiently twiddles his thumbs until the perfect opportunity presents itself.



As agile as a panther, Altair's devastating acrobatic prowess allows him access to every portion of the city.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ The thrill of the hunt
+ Taking foes out with more style than a 13th century Viewtiful Joe

GM HATES
- Being continually jostled by the crowd – we demand respect!

MOST WANTED METER 5

PS3's most exciting game. It feels genuinely fresh and exciting. A monster hit-in-waiting!

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: Prince of Persia, 86%
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Hitman: Blood Money, 85%
OUT SOONER: ...Dead Rising

GM MOST WANTED

OUT: TBC 2007 **DEVELOPER:** IRRATIONAL GAMES **PUBLISHER:** 2K GAMES **FORMAT:** 360 PC

BIOSHOCK

Life's not better down where it's wetter...

HANDS ON

PREVIEWER: Jes

HOW FINISHED?

WE PLAYED IT AT...
The E3 show!

WHAT WE PLAYED
- [x] 20 minutes-worth of monster-murdering and exploring through the murky tunnels.

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?
Despite the 'Shock' tag, this isn't, strictly speaking, a direct sequel to Irrational Games' *System Shock* games – it's more like a spiritual successor. In the underwater city of Rapture – built for geniuses and millionaires – a wonder-drug called Adam has backfired and things have gone all sorts of wrong.

FACTS
- More than a dozen weapons, with tactical fire modes – armour piercing and anti-personnel on the shotgun, for example
- Emotional AI – creatures are trying to survive, rather than simply running at you like murderous beasts

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

System Shock 2	90%
Freedom Force	84%

Nicest water ever? Well, yep – a combination of reflection, refraction, multiple animating maps and other technical witchcraft we don't understand means *Bioshock's* got the best salty glug ever to slosh around inside your telly. And you'll be seeing plenty of it – the entire game's set in a pressurised city under the sea, which means every knackered seam or broken window squirts the wet stuff, adding to the rotten look of the game.

That's hardly the only unique visual touch to this atmospheric shooter, though. For a start, thanks to the entire city being in a state of decay, everything's got a knackered, jury-rigged look to it – one sentry gun we saw, for instance, was simply a machine gun tied to an office chair. The alternative 1940s setting means the architecture's designed with an emphasis on art deco, with plenty of comedy adverts scattered around. And, most importantly, the fact that virtually every living creature in the city's now addicted to super-drug Adam means you'll be encountering all sorts of weird mutants on your plod through the murk.

Another interesting feature is the intelligence of the various life-forms you'll encounter. Most are just trying to fend for themselves in the collapsing city, so if you leave them alone they won't bother you – although they could be carrying stuff you want. Little Sisters, for instance, are the tiny girls who carry the drugs you need to power yourself up – but they're protected by huge, temperamental monsters known as Big Daddies. They'll attack if they feel threatened, but you can also use this to your advantage – by luring other enemies into attack them, say. As in their previous games, Irrational are aiming to let you make all the pivotal decisions as you explore the ruined city of Rapture, listening to people's diaries and notes and trying to work out what exactly went wrong. After all, Rapture might have some of the nicest water ever seen, but you don't want to spend your life down there, do you?

GM MOST WANTED GAMES

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Though it's ostensibly a first-person shooter, this isn't your typical run-'n-gun bullet-fest, as you might expect from the makers of the scary and sophisticated *System Shock 2*. Ammunition's scarce and monsters are plentiful, so clever tactics – like picking the right ammo, or goading enemies into murdering each other – are the order of the day. On top of that, there's a tremendous amount of decision making to cope with – do you *really* think that corpse over by the sentry gun's going to have something in its pockets worth getting shot over? Oh, you do? Then let's see you try it, pal... more so than any shooter we've played in recent history, *Bioshock* is really going to make you *think* about what you're going to do. Frankly, we're frothing a little at the mouth just thinking about it. Mmm.

ANY PROBLEMS?

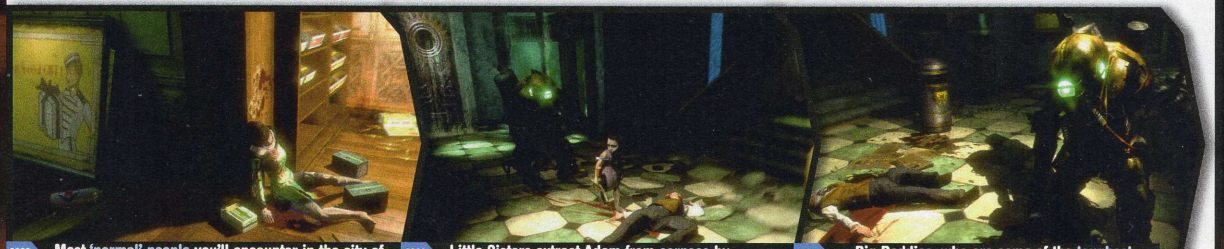
No-one, except us, has seen much of it – but then, that isn't exactly a problem.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Being swatted away by a Big Daddy – after scaring a Little Sister – then watching him lose interest and walk away as we cowered in the corner. These enemies are actually very clever indeed...

DEEP DENIZENS

In *Bioshock*, all the trouble's down to a drug called Adam. It'll make you faster and stronger – but the trouble is, it's running out, and with no way to get it, many people went completely nutso and started murdering each other rather than go cold turkey. Now it's every man for himself...



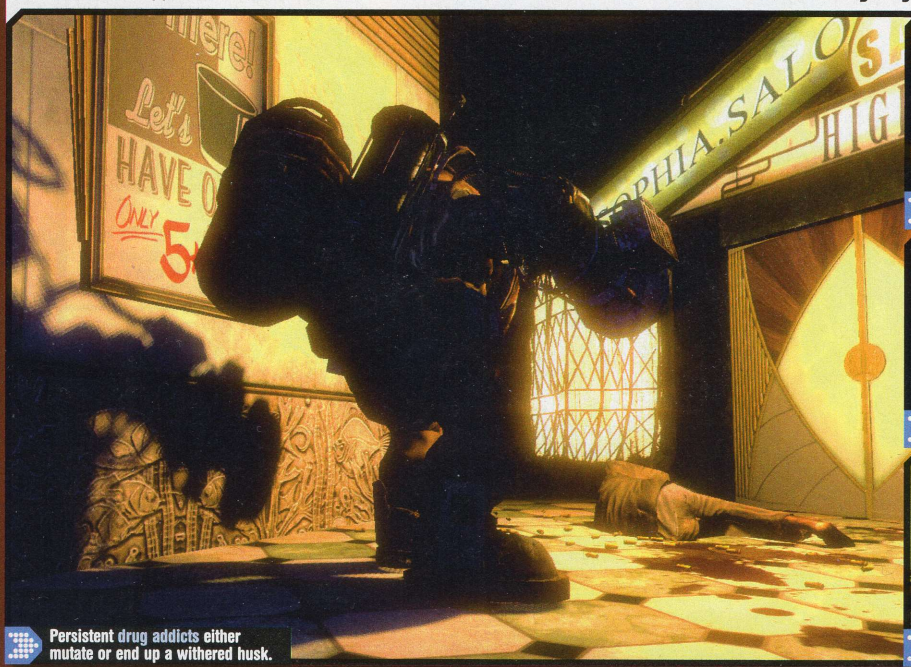
Most 'normal' people you'll encounter in the city of Rapture are, um, dead. It's that sort of place.

Little Sisters extract Adam from corpses by drilling their heads. And watch out for...

...Big Daddies, who are some of the toughest enemies you encounter.

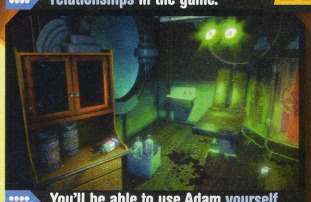
UNDER THE SEA

Rapture was supposedly a community built for the best of society after wonder drug Adam – extracted from a special kind of sea-slug and named after the apple-muncher from the Bible – was discovered on the ocean floor. Trouble is, now everything's going wrong...



Persistent drug addicts either mutate or end up a withered husk.

Graffiti hints at the uneasy relationships in the game.



You'll be able to use Adam yourself to 'mod' your own stats.

Or you could just knock back some vodka to replenish your energy.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Making the nasties fight each other
+ The cobbled-together look of the weapons

GM HATES
- Having to hurt little children to get our fix of health drugs...

MOST WANTED METER 5

A distinctive style, excellent puzzles and an interesting setting mean this is a future classic.

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: .....System Shock 2
BIGGEST RIVAL: .....Alan Wake
OUT SOONER: .....Gears of War

HELLGATE: LONDON

- FROM: FLAGSHIP STUDIOS
- OUT: WINTER
- FORMAT: PC

Developed by a rogue bunch of coders from the *Diablo* series, the resemblence is clear here – *Hellgate* looks like a first-person version of the earlier game. What's interesting, though, is that this isn't your typical FPS – many weapons don't even require aiming, leaving you free to concentrate on tactical thinking.

These dual laser-thingies are a classic example of *Hellgate's* auto-homing weapons.

MOST WANTED METER 4

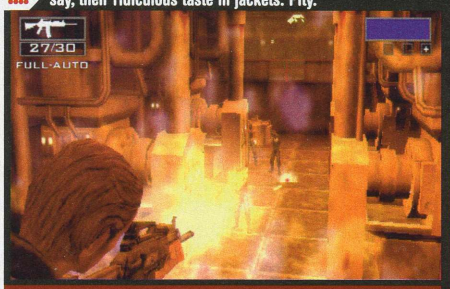
Although it's competing with dozens of monster-stuffed first-person shooters, *Hellgate's* certainly inventive – it even uses *Diablo* technology to generate random 3D levels.

MIAMI VICE: THE GAME

- FROM: REBELLION
- OUT: JULY
- FORMAT: PSP

Based on the new, super-gritty Jamie Foxx/Colin Farrell film – and not the creaky old 80s series – expect less pastel shirts and more bloodshed in this small-screen adaptation. It's mostly over-the-shoulder shooting action, but car and boat chases come as standard.

The film's about the duo's troubled relationship – and not, say, their ridiculous taste in jackets. Pity.



MOST WANTED METER 3

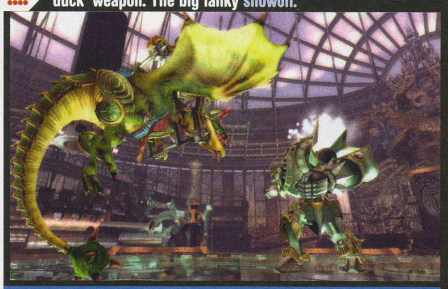
It looks like pretty standard stuff, but what's most impressive is the Wi-Fi co-op mode – letting you and a mate tear through a variety of scumbags with Crockett and Tubbs together.

EYE OF JUDGEMENT

- FROM: SONY
- OUT: TBA
- FORMAT: PS3

Picture this: you put down a *real* playing card on a *real* table... and it turns into a proper monster! Sort of. Thanks to improved pattern-recognition technology, Sony's EyeToy can translate your moves into on-screen dragon-summoning, for one of the most interesting games we saw at E3.

At E3, Sony's Phil Harrison unleashed a special, magical, 'duck' weapon. The big lanky showoff.



MOST WANTED METER 3

With 100 cards to play with and thousands of possible combinations, this looks impressive on a technical level, but it'll be interesting to see what sort of game it makes.

MARIO HOOPS 3 ON 3

- FROM: NINTENDO
- OUT: SEPTEMBER
- FORMAT: DS

Adding yet another sport to his resume, this isn't exactly basketball as you know it – Mazza's completely ditched the 2/3 point scoring system in favour of dishing out scores dependent on how flash your shot is. Combine that with a stylus-based control system and you've got balling that takes a lot of getting used to, but done with typical Nintendo flare.

Surely Kong's at an advantage over a midget plumper in basketball – being a monkey and everything?

MOST WANTED METER 3

We'll play anything with Mario in it, but this isn't lighting our world on fire at the moment – there's a lot of basketball about. Still, it must be better than *And 1 Streetball*.

THRILLVILLE

- FROM: LUCASARTS
- OUT: AUTUMN
- FORMAT: XBOX PSP PS2

Think *Theme Park*, only more expansive – you've got a park full of rides and 1000 people to scare, flirt with, extort and ultimately try to make happy. It's not all sim stuff, though – our favourite pastime's wandering the park and trying out all the minigames, which range from go-kart racing to *Gradius*-style shooting galleries.

You can design your own tracks for many of the park's rides, like this go-karting section.

MOST WANTED METER 3

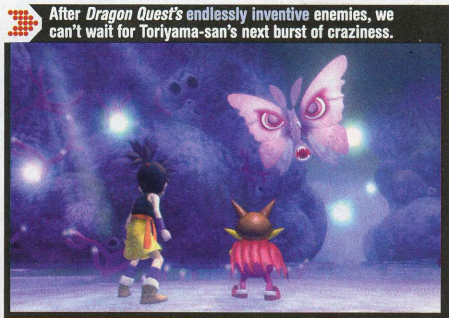
Although the physics are pretty good and there's plenty of opportunity for business-minded Xbox owners to oversalt the chips, the emphasis here's firmly on fun.

BLUE DRAGON

- FROM: MISTWALKER
- OUT: TBA
- FORMAT: 360

With developers from *Final Fantasy* and *Panzer Dragoon* on board and *Dragon Ball/Dragon Quest* artist Akira Toriyama on character design, the first Japanese-developed game for 360's got quite the all-star cast. In a nutshell, it's an RPG set in a world where people's shadows give them special powers. Weird... but possibly quite special.

After *Dragon Quest's* endlessly inventive enemies, we can't wait for Toriyama-san's next burst of craziness.



MOST WANTED METER 4

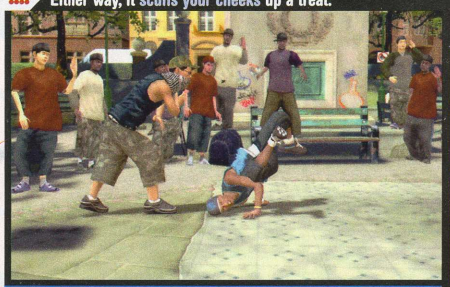
With a distinct sci-fi edge setting it apart from your typical orcs and ogres fantasy roleplaying fare, this could be another RPG for people who don't like RPGs.

B-BOY

- FROM: SONY
- OUT: SEPTEMBER
- FORMAT: PSP PS2

Unlike your standard bemani fare, *B-Boy* offers a complex dancing system that's more *Tony Hawk's* than *Dance Dance Revolution*. Points are awarded for staying on the beat, pulling off combos and throwing in extra power moves, with top/down rock provided via some extremely impressive motion capturing.

We think this is called a 'baby'. Or possibly a 'chair'. Either way, it scuffs your cheeks up a treat.



MOST WANTED METER 4

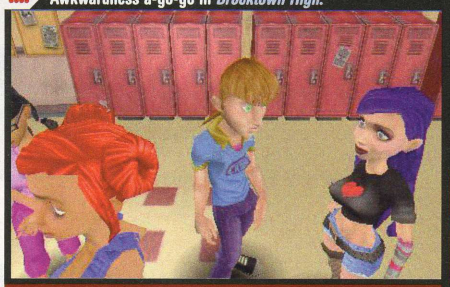
An impressive dancing game? It's almost unheard of, but *B-Boy* seems to command proper skill and impressive moves very well. Could well be one to watch.

BROOKTOWN HIGH: SENIOR YEAR

- FROM: KONAMI
- OUT: SPRING 2007
- FORMAT: PSP

Brooktown High offers you your pick of the jocks, nerds, preppies and rebels over a year of high school, and invites you to woo them via minigames like 'shopping' and 'joke-telling'.

'So, um, would you, like, like to go to the prom with me?' Awkwardness a-go-go in *Brooktown High*.



MOST WANTED METER 2

We're tempted to say that this is the sort of thing you should probably be doing in real life rather than games, but maybe we'll get to live out our *Saved By The Bell*-style fantasies.

HELLBOY

- FROM: KONAMI
- OUT: 2007
- FORMAT: PSP 360 PS3

Based on the comic rather than the film, *Hellboy's* straight fist-smashing stuff with a slew of extra moves – think charging moves, vicious combos and the opportunity to swing enemies into other enemies for huge damage. You'll also be seeing other popular characters from the frankly marvellous comic.

He's a devil brought to earth by Nazi scientists – but he's actually quite a nice chap. Bizarre.

MOST WANTED METER 3

After a duffer of a film, it's nice to see the 'Boy go back to his superhero roots for this one. Looking good, although not quite among the top rank of shiny next-gen stuff.

GM MOST WANTED

• OUT: 2007 • DEVELOPER: PANDEMIC • PUBLISHER: TBA
• FORMAT: PS3

MERCENARIES 2 WORLD IN FLAMES™

Money makes the world go 'round...

The first *Mercenaries* could easily have been called *GTA: War* (although Rockstar would probably have sued). This sequel goes even further in offering an enormous world to play in, with a slew of superb new gameplay improvements.

Once again you're accepting contracts from a number of different factions and buying or stealing vehicles and weapons to fulfil your objectives. This time around, though, you can play co-operatively with a friend, watercraft make an appearance (so there's no more automatic drowning – and there are even submersible vehicles), and you can recruit other mercenaries and make your own miniature army.

The first game was ace, and this looks like easily being better. Developers Pandemic have also promised a far larger playing area (not that the first game was in any way small) and fabulous details like being able to shoot a hole in a truck's petrol tank, then lighting the leaking fuel with a match for fiery death. Sounds just brilliant, no? GM

Not the safest place to have a fight by any stretch of the imagination.

It looks much nicer than the original game, which could be a bit drab.

Man with beard attempts to fight tank. He's going to lose.

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?

Accept contracts, nick vehicles and shoot bad men in war-torn hotspots.

FACTS

- A new game world that's bigger than all the maps of the first game combined
- Two-player co-operative mode

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

Mercenaries	90%
Full Spectrum Warrior	85%

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES

+ Nicking tanks in war-torn Venezuela. Ace!
+ The co-operative mode. A great idea

GM HATES

- We just hope it can avoid being a bit samey. But we're sure that's not going to be a problem...

MOST WANTED METER 4

A solid-looking sequel to a cracking original, this'll be sandbox gameplay at its finest.

• OUT: TBA • DEVELOPER: REMEDY • PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT • FORMAT: PC 360

Alan WAKE™

No rest for the wicked.

We know, we know – the name's rubbish, right? It's a bit of a desperate pun, because the titular Mr. Wake can't sleep. So he is – wait for it – A. Wake. See?

Name aside, though, this is looking very promising indeed. It's all a bit Stephen King, in that Wakesy is a best-selling horror writer whose muse (his girlfriend) has gone missing. As a result, he can't write, can't sleep, and may be going mad. So he checks into a sleep clinic in a cosy rural town, and that's when things start getting really weird...

WAKING UP

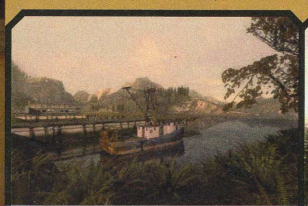
Coming from the makers of *Max Payne*, *Alan Wake* is similarly noir-ish and atmospheric. Although little has been seen of the action elements, this appears to be more about exploration and discovery than all-out gunplay, and there's an interesting dynamic concerning light and dark. Alan's nightmares come to life in the dark, and nights last longer and longer as the game progresses, so it's important to use torches, streetlights and car headlights to keep things bright and safe.

There's also huge emphasis on telling a story. In fact, even though the superb next-gen graphics and enormous, explorable game world put it in a completely different league, *Alan Wake* nevertheless reminds us a little of the GameCube's excellent *Eternal Darkness*, which itself had a strong narrative and sanity-muddling goings-on. All good stuff, then. GM

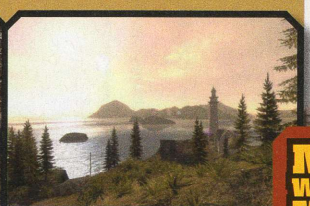
While the environments are a bit empty at the moment – the game's still quite early on – it looks eyeball-squeezingly lovely.

TERROR TOWN

An increasingly disturbed Alan relocates to the sleepy town of Pride Falls (a clue in the name, perhaps?). It's brilliantly detailed and completely explorable – just look at it!



There's an entire town to explore. But you'll find nasty things, inevitably.



What's the betting you can get a boat to that distant shore?

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?

A 'psychological action thriller' with an emphasis on story and atmosphere.

FACTS

- Play in a free-roaming, living world, which you can explore completely
- Emphasis on light and dark – Alan's nightmares become real in the dark...

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

Max Payne	92%
Madtrax	48%

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES

+ The huge, sprawling, spooky game world
+ The strong story, which is very intriguing

GM HATES

- How will the action elements work? They're a mystery as yet

MOST WANTED METER 4

Despite the rubbish name this is looking genuinely unsettling and full of horror-based fun.

ENEMY TERRITORY QUAKE WARS

OUT: TBC **DEV:** SPLASH DAMAGE **PUB:** ACTIVISION
FORMAT: PC

Who let the Stroggs out?

After the majestic *Wolfenstein: Enemy Territory*, with its objective-based gameplay and frantic murderousness, iD have done the logical thing and decided to apply the same dynamic to good old *Quake*.

Show-floor impressions suggest that the team dynamic's still firmly in place in QET. One of the first objectives involves taking a bridge – this means protecting engineers while they repair it enough to get across, then covering teammates as you pile forward. It's all very tactical, but not enough to detract from the central point of the game – shooting each other in the face, hard.

This is looking like a brilliant next step for the *Quake* series. The Strogg can also 'Stroggify' fallen enemies, which doesn't sound nice.

MOST WANTED METER 5

There's something about the objective-centric gameplay that really makes the teamwork work here. We didn't even mind getting onside with some whooping Americans for this one. As long they leave our mothers out of it.

SUPER PAPER MARIO

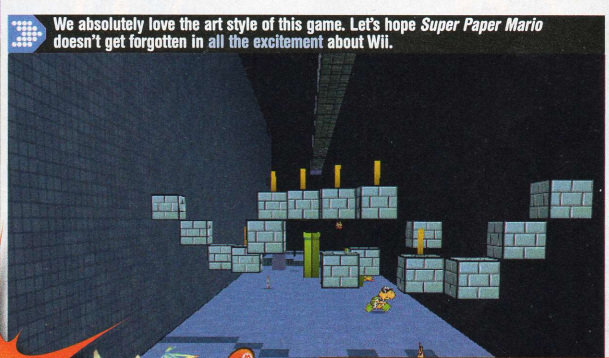
We watched it on 'paper' view. No, not really.

OUT: TBC **DEVELOPER:** INTELLIGENT SYSTEMS **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO
FORMAT: CUBE

Forget basketball, tennis, dancing, and all Mario's other extra-curricular activities – this is *Mario* as it's meant to be played, in 2D with plenty of block-hopping and bouncing on people's heads, plus a bit of RPG fun.

The most surprising bit of *Super Paper Mario* is its characters. After honing her head-bonking skills in *Super Princess Peach*, the frilly-dressed kidnap-magnet brings her parasol-swinging skills to Cube. Unexpectedly, so does Bowser.

Although it's mostly in 2D – with nice visual touches like a pixelly giant Mario – *Paper Mario* certainly uses the Cube's power. 3D rendered stages appear behind Mario and there are brief bits of *Super Mario 3*-style dimensional activity. There are eight levels in the game altogether, and we're told that certain elements of the game will be 'drawn' right in front of you, which ought to keep things interesting. The always-excellent developer Intelligent Systems also promise 'traps, puzzles, and bizarre mysteries', which sounds just dandy to us. GM



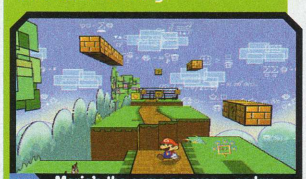
We absolutely love the art style of this game. Let's hope *Super Paper Mario* doesn't get forgotten in all the excitement about Wii.

MOST WANTED METER 3

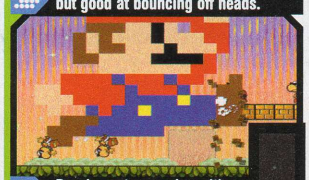
Certain to be technically excellent and a whole lot of fun, there's just something about Mario's constant presence that means he wasn't quite as exciting as some of the other games at last month's E3 show. Still nice, though.

MAZZA!

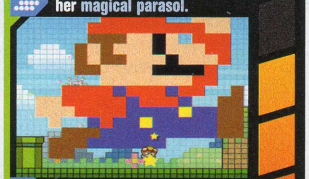
Luigi must be in tears – he's basically been ditched in favour of Mario's girlfriend and sworn enemy.



Mario's the same as ever – podgy, but good at bouncing off heads.



Peach swats enemies with her magical parasol.



And Bowser's slower, but don't get in his way.

COMPANY OF HEROES

FROM: RELIC **OUT:** TBC PC

If you throw a stick at a room full of developers, chances are it'll hit somebody who's working on an 'authentic WW2 shooter'. Still, this one should be worth looking out for - completely destructible buildings mean no two fights'll ever be the same, and the squad-based strategy looks excellent.

Create your own cover by ruthlessly destroying a church that took someone 50 years to build.

MOST WANTED METER 4

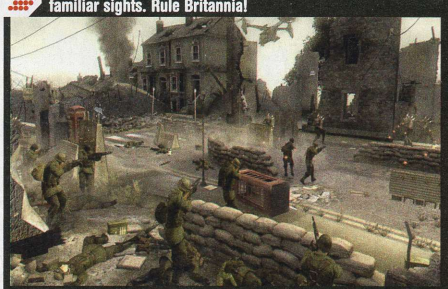
The AI impressed us a lot, and the environmental damage is undeniably pretty. File this one somewhere behind *Call Of Duty* in the want-to-play stakes.

RESISTANCE: FALL OF MAN

FROM: SONY **OUT:** TBA PS3

This one's the old 'man's last stand against unstoppably ugly aliens' shooter, with a slight difference – squad members get involved in tussles right in front of your eyes, leaving you free to help them out in exchange for assistance.

The game's set in good old England, so expect plenty of familiar sights. Rule Britannia!



MOST WANTED METER 3

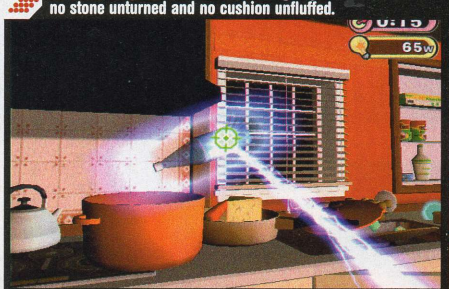
Nice, but seeing this during Sony's E3 keynote presentation the other month made their *Killzone 2* 'graphical projections' look ever so slightly ridiculous.

ELEBITS

FROM: KONAMI **OUT:** LATE 2006 Wii

Warning: this is weird. In a nutshell, in a fictional world where electricity's provided by hundreds of tiny creatures called elebits, they've all gone on strike. Instead of sending in the trade unionists, it's your job to fling things around and zap the workshy little slackers into submission. Absolute carnage.

Those tricksy Elebits could be hiding anywhere, so leave no stone unturned and no cushion unfluffed.



MOST WANTED METER 3

The producer told us he wants to 'give the sense of moving things around', and he's succeeded. Trashing the house was never quite so much fun.

GM MOST WANTED

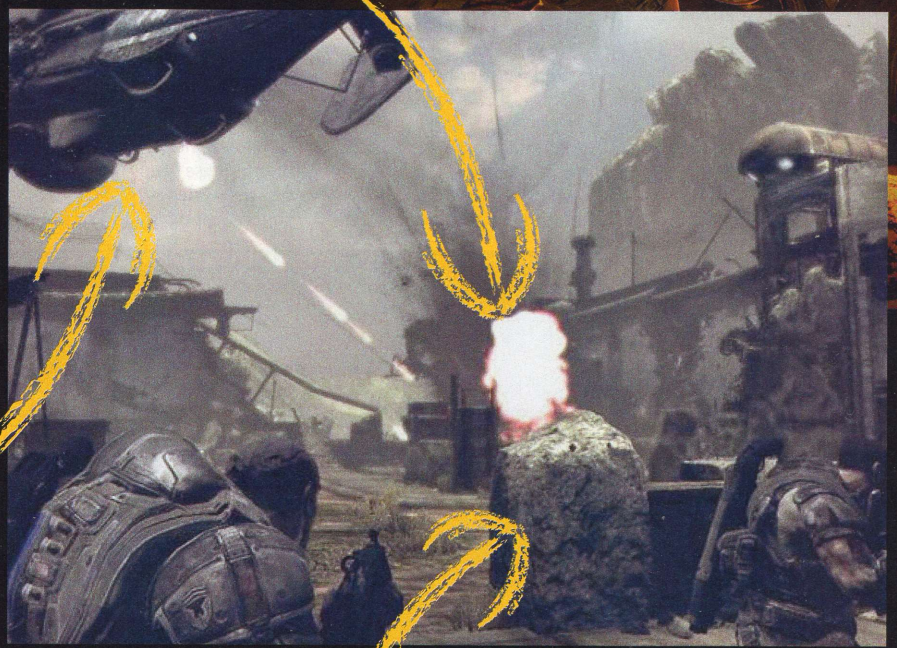
• OUT: NOV • DEVELOPER: EPIC GAMES • PUBLISHER: MICROSOFT
• FORMAT: 360

10 REASONS WHY...

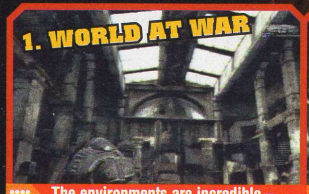
GEARS OF WAR

...WILL ROCK YOUR WORLD!

These shots are all taken from the game's opening stage, the 'Prison Break', where main character Marcus Fenix is rescued at the beginning of the game. It's a pretty small section of the action that we saw being played at E3 and demonstrates many of the key features that we touched on back in *GM*173. Nothing, however, could have prepared us for the brilliance that is the eight-player team deathmatch...



1. WORLD AT WAR



The environments are incredible – believable, ravaged warzones.

They're also destructible, so you can topple this tower...

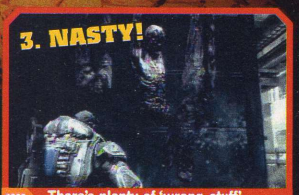
...sending those nasty Locust grunts tumbling through the air.

2. STAND-OFF

Explent plenty of stand-offs and set-pieces against clever enemy AI.

They'll also try to outflank you. Place your men wisely!

3. NASTY!



There's plenty of 'wrong-stuff'. Corpses, skeletons, decapitations!

4. GRENADE!

At last, a grenade throwing system that lets you aim properly.

5. TAKE COVER!

The cover system is so slick, you'll never accept clunky controls again.

You can 'blindfire' while still running, giving cover to your teammates.

Going from cover to cover is just a simple button press away.

6. WARZONE!

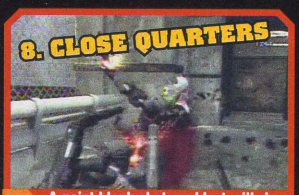
There's a real feeling of being in a battle, with air support and more.

Next-gen tech means more effects to enhance the frantic atmosphere.

7. RUN FOR IT!

Hold down A for Fenix to make a crouched dash for cover.

8. CLOSE QUARTERS



A point blank shotgun blast will rip through flesh, sending limbs flying.

9. KEEPING IT REAL

You can't cross open ground safely. Everything feels deadly serious.

10. MULTI-PLAYER!

Getting a four-on-four LAN game of *Gears of War* at last month's E3 delivered everything Epic's rarely-quiet lead designer Cliffy B has always promised... plus a gun with a built-in chainsaw. You only needed to get shot out in the open *once* to start hugging cover like it was a lovely girl. And it was easy to love – the one-button controls made things simple, but you had to work as a team as you fanned out in the city environment, sniping, giving covering fire and sneaking up on the enemy to get into chainsawing proximity. It looked truly next-generation with the clever, shaky camera work really ramping up the sense of panic when you legged it between cover to avoid enemy fire. We can't wait to play more.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Violence, the amazing control system, and the realistic approach to blasting

GM HATES
- The fact that we have to wait until November to get our hands on it!

MOST WANTED METER 5

It's the best thing on 360 at the moment, no question. At least until *Halo 3* comes to town...

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: .....Resident Evil 4
BIGGEST RIVAL: Resistance: Fall of Man
OUT SOONER: .....Half Life 2 Ep 1

頭文字 INITIAL D

DRIFT RACER

"THE DRIVING SCENES ARE AMAZING"
FRONT

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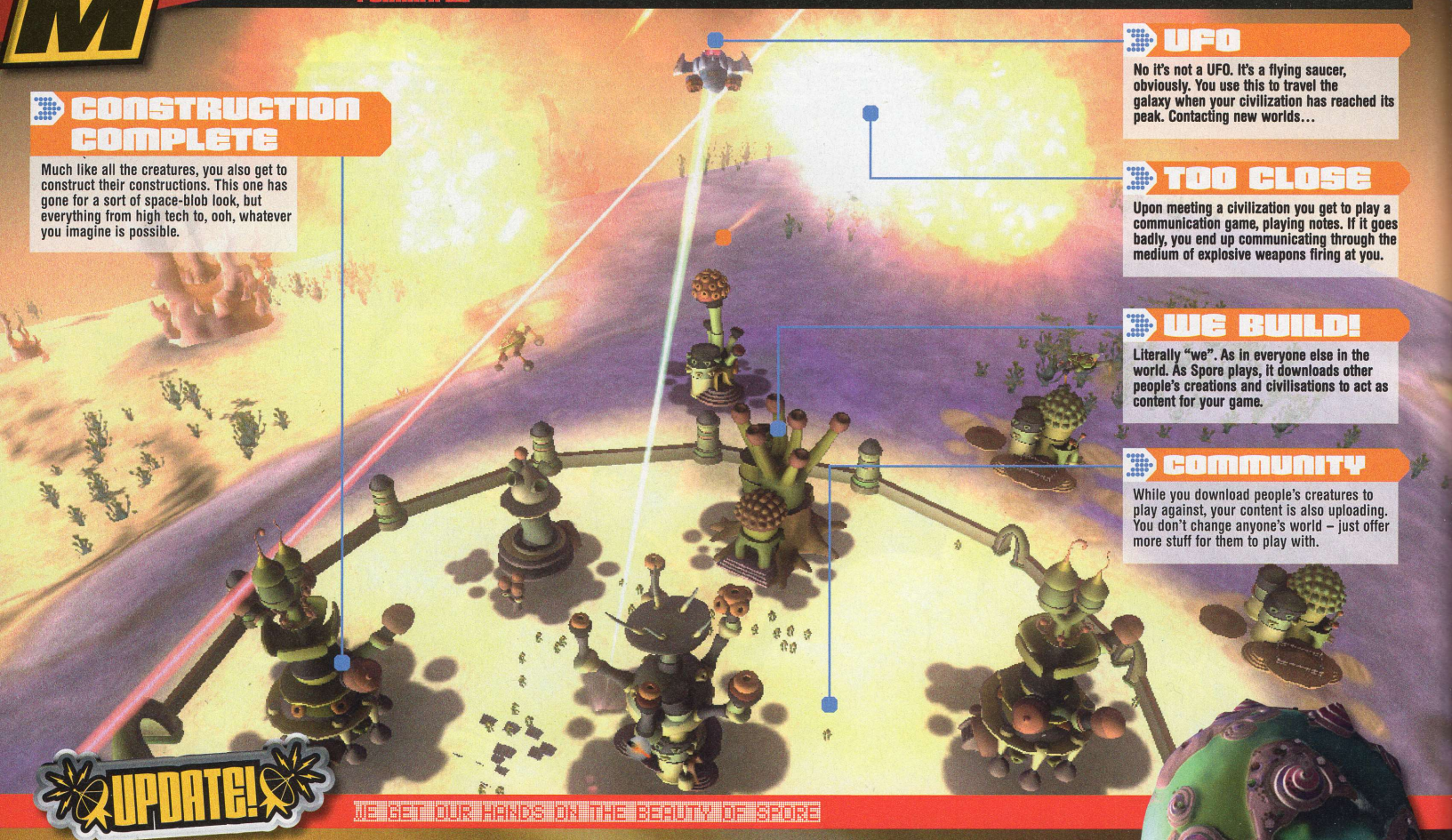
OUT: TBA • DEVELOPER: MAXIS • PUBLISHER: EA
• FORMAT: PC



CONSTRUCTION COMPLETE
Much like all the creatures, you also get to construct their constructions. This one has gone for a sort of space-blob look, but everything from high tech to, ooh, whatever you imagine is possible.

UFO
No it's not a UFO. It's a flying saucer, obviously. You use this to travel the galaxy when your civilization has reached its peak. Contacting new worlds...

TOO CLOSE
Upon meeting a civilization you get to play a communication game, playing notes. If it goes badly, you end up communicating through the medium of explosive weapons firing at you.

WE BUILD!
Literally "we". As in everyone else in the world. As Spore plays, it downloads other people's creations and civilisations to act as content for your game.

COMMUNITY
While you download people's creatures to play against, your content is also uploading. You don't change anyone's world – just offer more stuff for them to play with.

UPDATE!

GET OUR HANDS ON THE BEAUTY OF SPORE

SPORE

Look out: here comes the new breed.

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?
The new game by Will Wright, creator of the *Sims* and *Sim City*.

FACTS
- You create a microscopic creature, that you control as it evolves
- Make any creature you want, and it'll work out how to operate realistically.

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

The Sims 2	72%
Sim City 4	86%

LOVE!
It's that age-old story. Spore meets spore. Spore gets terribly frustrated. Spore develops reproductive capacities. Spores get jiggy. More spores are created. It's the circle of life!

"I don't suppose you fancy improving our lung capacity?"

"Maybe we can develop our cranial capacity too."

It's difficult to know where to start. So let's start at the very beginning. In the beginning there's a tiny little creature, moving around in two dimensions. It's eating things. It's growing bigger. It's growing extra bits. It's pretty cute. It's not doing much.

Now, just to get the idea, let's skip to the end. You're flying around in a UFO, in a universe containing millions of stars, populated with uniquely created alien races and you're interfering and playing with them in any way your enormo-skulled alien space-god mind can allow.

It's the same game. Getting from that tiny speck of life to that spaceship in a huge universe is both the whole story, and only the beginning. It's a game with no end. It's really somewhat impressive, even if it doesn't work. Which it may not. Isn't this exciting!

SPORE-DROPPING

Essentially, the core of the game is following that spore of life through its creation, going through all the stages of existence. This means the game changes its genre several times in its history. It starts with something resembling *Pac-Man*, becomes an action game (when it goes 3D with you hunting and running away), then a social simulator (when you get a small tribe), turns into a management game (when you turn into a town), a war game (when other towns start to war with yours) and finally steps into space and becomes a play-box of everything you can imagine.

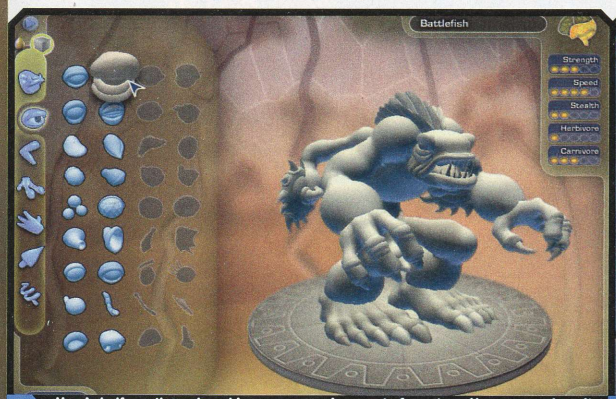
It's a special idea, but a couple of features make it stand out even more. Firstly, it's not just following a pre-generated creature. As you develop you earn the ability to mutate and change your beast, altering all its pieces in a seeming endless number of ways. The game then looks at what you've made, and using Clever Game Science, works out how it would move.

Secondly, as you do this, the game's uploading your creatures online for everyone else to play against, and vice versa. This player-generated content means endless creatures to play against.

It's a big idea, to say the least. The very biggest. There's never been anything quite like this before, and no-one knows what to make of it (especially when you suspect that what you can make of it is "anything"). More than any game currently in development, no-one really knows what it's going to be like. Which means that everyone wants to play it. Finally, a game where 'next-generation' means just that. GM

UNARRESTED DEVELOPMENT

The core of the game is the creature generator, where you get to fiddle with your spore-creature's DNA. Add limbs, heads, floppy bits, nobbly bits and brains and then see how it all works out.



Here's halfway through making a more serious sort of creature. You can see how its statistics are altered on the right.

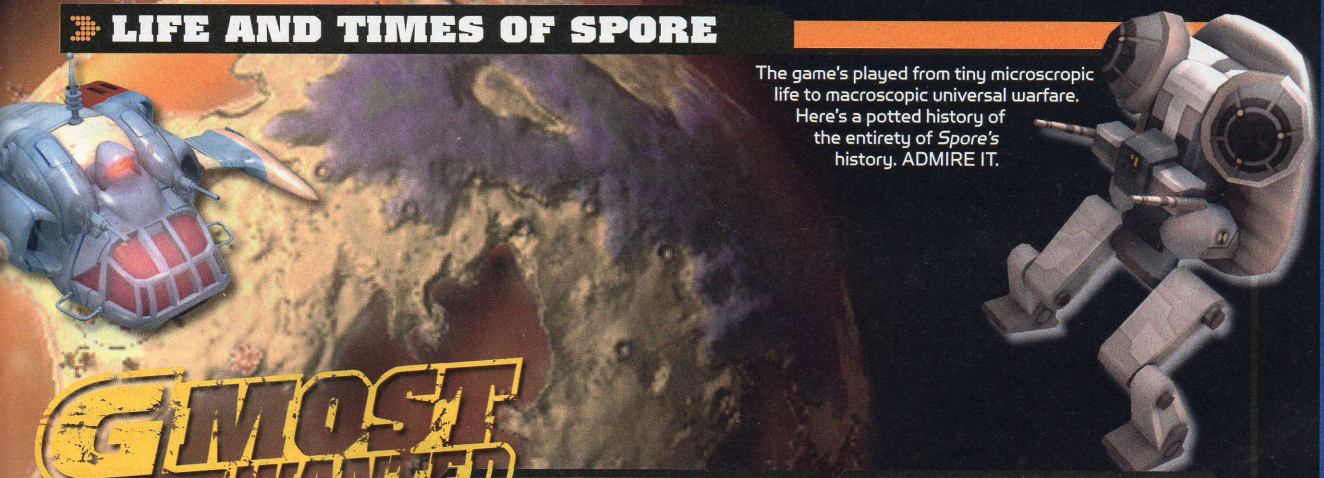
And here's the finished creature. Or, at least, finished for now. Plenty of time to rethink what works and what doesn't later.

Getting hit on the head by a lizard. A Bad Thing. Just look at the armoured tail!

Maxis make non-violent games, apparently. Someone hasn't told Maxis.

LIFE AND TIMES OF SPORE

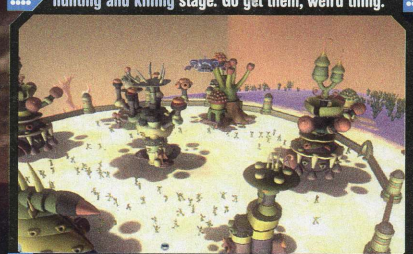
The game's played from tiny microscopic life to macroscopic universal warfare. Here's a potted history of the entirety of *Spore's* history. ADMIRE IT.



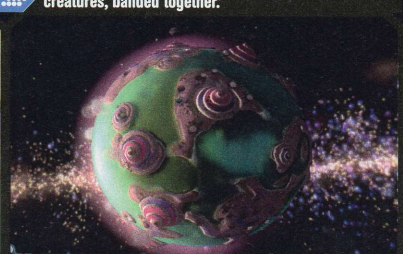
GM MOST WANTED GAMES

We've missed the microscopic stuff, heading onto the hunting and killing stage. Go get them, weird thing.

Eventually, society forms. See! A small group of your creatures, banded together.



And now many more, forming a city. Then an empire, waging wars with other alien empires.



Finally, you get your UFO and head into space to interfere with other cultures. Like so. Messy.

HANDS ON

PREVIEWER: Kieron

HOW FINISHED?

WE SAW IT AT...

Los Angeles, last month. And it was mighty fine

WHAT WE SAW

- [x] Create-a-beast!
- [x] Raise-a-beast!
- [x] Conquer new worlds!
- [x] Online-type stuff

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Spore's being kept under close guard, and very few have actually got intimate with it. However, there was a public demonstration at last month's E3 with comedian (Well, he used to be funny) and noted videogame fan Robin Williams, who got a chance to play around with the creature creator. It's clearly an enormously powerful system, with the famous chap lobbing on limbs, distending the nose to enormous sizes and then sitting back to see the game work out how this ludicrous beast works. At the very least, this aspect works *brilliantly*.

ANY PROBLEMS?

Really, the only problem we can see is if whether the whole shebang actually works as a game. It's incredibly ambitious, but we're sure if anyone can do this kind of thing, Will Wright can.

BEST BIT SO FAR

We got a broad overview of the whole thing at the E3 demo last month, and really, it's the overarching development of your single-celled spore to space-faring, culture-fiddling wonder-thing, and all the different styles of gameplay that this entails. It's almost too big to get your head around.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES

+ Its sheer ambition. There's never, ever been a game anything at all like this. Blimey

GM HATES

- Well... will it work? Will all these bits and pieces form into something generally fun?

MOST WANTED METER 5

It almost doesn't matter if this works or not. It's a game that everyone is going to have to play,.

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: .....Er, nothing, really.
BIGGEST RIVAL: .....It doesn't really have one.
OUT SOONER:.....It's unique!

GM MOST WANTED

■ OUT: TBC ■ DEVELOPER: BIOWARE ■ PUBLISHER: BIOWARE
■ FORMAT: 360

SPELL IT!

Although there's a lot of killing, there's also a fair bit of what BioWare are calling 'science-based magic'.

Over the shoulder aiming might be simple, but it still relies on stats.

In the future, everyone will wear figure-hugging clothes. No idea why.

Why are aliens never attractive, like the ones from our 'special' films?

MASS EFFECT

Like *Jade Empire* in space! So it's *Knights of the Old Republic*, then...

GM MOST WANTED GAMES

Coming from the people who made *Jade Empire* and *Knights Of The Old Republic*, you'd expect your actions to have consequences – but you might be surprised just how far they'll go. With a mass of alien races to negotiate with, chat to or murder, what you do won't just make them like *you* less or more – it'll affect their whole perception of humanity. Upset someone enough, and you might just cause an intergalactic war. Which isn't good.

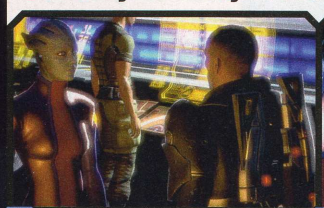
TALK THE LINE

Unlike *Jade* and *Knights*, you'll also be able to tread a finer diplomatic line than being simply 'good' or 'evil', with a conversational option-maker that'll let you steer the emotional content of your chat in six different directions. Be positive and you'll say nice, bland things – keep being negative and you might pull a gun.

Speaking of which, combat's a depature from all of BioWare's previous games, an interesting blend of real-time action and RPG points. Basically, you have to aim weapons at enemies yourself, but once you've pulled the trigger a whole host of factors – from your own skill and upgrades to how long you've had your weapon – determine whether you'll hit your target or not. Squadmates will move and fire independently, though you can take over from any of them at any time you like. BioWare are being maddeningly vague about the release date at the moment – they say 'Christmas' but not whether they mean this year or next year – but this is definitely one for your videogaming diary. GM

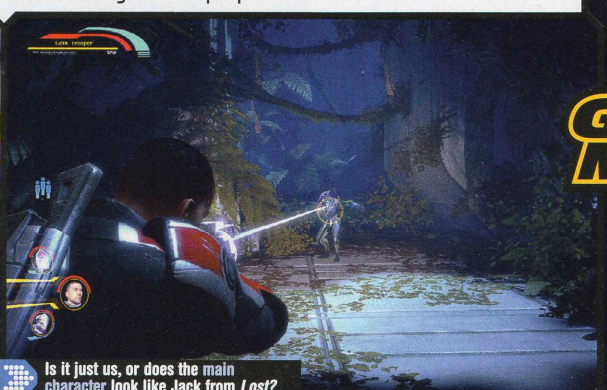
TALK TO THE FACE

BioWare's buzzwords with this are 'digital actors' - we thought we'd seen them before, but they're promising the best ones ever. Apparently, revolutionary AI and dialogue creation systems will make it seem like you're interacting with real people. We'll believe it when we see it...



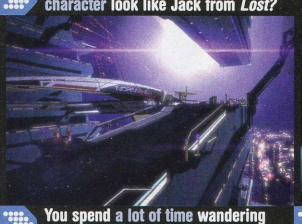
These filthy aliens will respond realistically to your insults...

...so it's probably best not to call them 'filthy aliens', really.

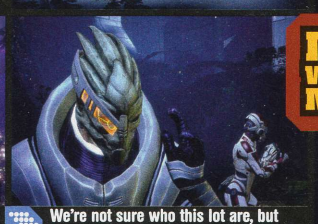


Is it just us, or does the main character look like Jack from *Lost*?

In certain cultures, a laser bolt in the face is a form of diplomacy.



You spend a lot of time wandering about this 30-mile ship/planet.



We're not sure who this lot are, but they look fairly evil.

HANDS ON

PREVIEWER: Geraint

HOW FINISHED? 360

WE SAW IT AT...
May's E3 show, where BioWare demoed it for us

WHAT WE SAW
- [x] Whole worlds
- [x] Combat system
- [x] Vehicles
- [x] No spaceship combat

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

To be honest, mostly like a more refined *Jade Empire* – with the black-'n-white choices gone, you've got the chance to play things a bit more diplomatically and tread the line between nice and nasty without actually sacrificing any of your powers or abilities. *Knights of the Old Republic 2* made a few baby steps towards this by letting you influence your companions via your actions and dialogue, but it's only with *Mass Effect* that BioWare seem to have really cracked the either/or barrier. It's also tactically quite diverse – another bit of the demo we saw showed our gang lobbing grenades *behind* a group of enemies to bring a rock formation down on their heads. It's an interesting blend of RPG-style tactics – you earn levelling up points that'll increase your aiming skills and conversational ability - and straight-up gunplay.

ANY PROBLEMS?

We're a bit disappointed by the lack of ship-to-ship space battles – but we'll live.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Caning around in a six-wheeled exploration vehicle and occasionally clattering into some alien scum. It's a hoot.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Being unpredictable in conversations
+ The huge scale of everything

GM HATES
- The lighting effects get a bit much at times. Is everything really that shiny?

MOST WANTED METER Certain to be impressive and huge in scale, we can't see very much wrong with this. **5**

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: .....KOTOR
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Phantasy Star Universe (Oct)
OUT SOONER: .....Too Human

OUT: JANUARY 2007 • DEVELOPER: SONY • PUBLISHER: SONY • FORMAT: PS2

GOD OF WAR 2

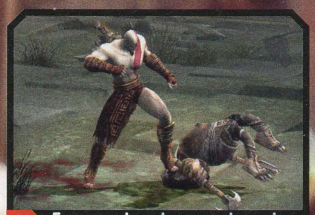
All bow down to the god of PS2 games!

Kratos might have officially proved himself as the God of War in the first game, but his fight is far from over, and Sony are far from finished with expanding on the brilliant original game.

Set to be probably the last big Sony-developed game for the PS2, *God of War 2* is looking every bit as beautiful and action-packed as the first game. Betrayed by the gods, Kratos is forced on a journey to seek out the Sisters of Fate for help.

Once again, various Greek gods make appearances throughout, granting new abilities and dishing out extra powerful weapons. Many will be entirely new for the sequel – for instance, there's now the inclusion of Icarus wings, although we haven't yet had chance to try them out. We guess flying close to the sun is out of the question...

The development team say that *God of War 2* will include many features they were unable to implement in the first game because of time restraints. With the game engine already there and plenty of development time left, *God of War 2* certainly shouldn't disappoint. Look forward to more bloody battles, magical weaponry and big monsters in early 2007. GM



Even more huge bosses and enemies, even more slashing them up.

Kratos paints the town a whole new shade of red thanks to a chain whip and a lot of unresolved anger issues.

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?

The sequel to *God Of War* sees you back in control of the godlike Kratos.

FACTS

- New moves and magic, utilising the power of wind, ice and more
- New mythological beasts like the Gryphon, more enemies and bosses

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

God of War	94%
24: The Game	80%

GM MOST WANTED GAMES

MOST WANTED METER

Sony have a brilliant building block to start off with in *God of War*. We can't wait to play the mythical, blood-splattered sequel – if it can prove to be better than the original it'll be an instant classic.

5

OUT: AUTUMN 2006 • DEV: ATARI • PUB: ATARI
FORMAT: PS2 PC PSP 360

Take to the beachy roads in one of over 100 licensed cars.

Save up your pennies and you can have one of these.

TEST DRIVE UNLIMITED

Crap name, high octane game!

The Xbox 360 has some fine driving games. It doesn't, however, have a massively multi-player online one as yet. All that is set to change with *Test Drive Unlimited*, though.

With around 150 licensed cars and bikes to buy and burn around in, this is certainly no *Midtown Madness*. The handling of the cars is as realistic as possible, as is the look of them. Visit a car showroom to buy a car and you're able to choose from all the real-life interior options, colours and so on.

DRIVE-BY

At the tap of a button you can also see a GPS satellite image of the island you're on – an island which spans around 1000 miles of diverse roads.

So it's big, with impressive detail, but what of the multi-player aspect? Essentially, thousands of players will be inhabiting the map online. You're able to chat to and race against anyone you come across. And even better, there aren't set race tracks as such – you choose a route yourself before racing. With money to win and cars and property to buy there's plenty to strive toward.

It's certainly ambitious. We'll know how ambitious very soon. GM

MOST WANTED METER

A racing game with a difference, *Test Drive Unlimited* is an exciting online offering that ditches the lobby to just let you cruise around looking for players, and, once you've found them, challenge them to races.

4

OUT: 13TH SEPTEMBER • DEVELOPER: OUTERLIGHT • PUBLISHER: MINDSCAPE
FORMAT: PC

THE SHIP

Murder on the high seas...

Set on a fleet of 1930s steam liners, all packed to the gunwales with handy weapons and environmental traps, up to 32 players can climb aboard *The Ship* for online deathmatch fun.

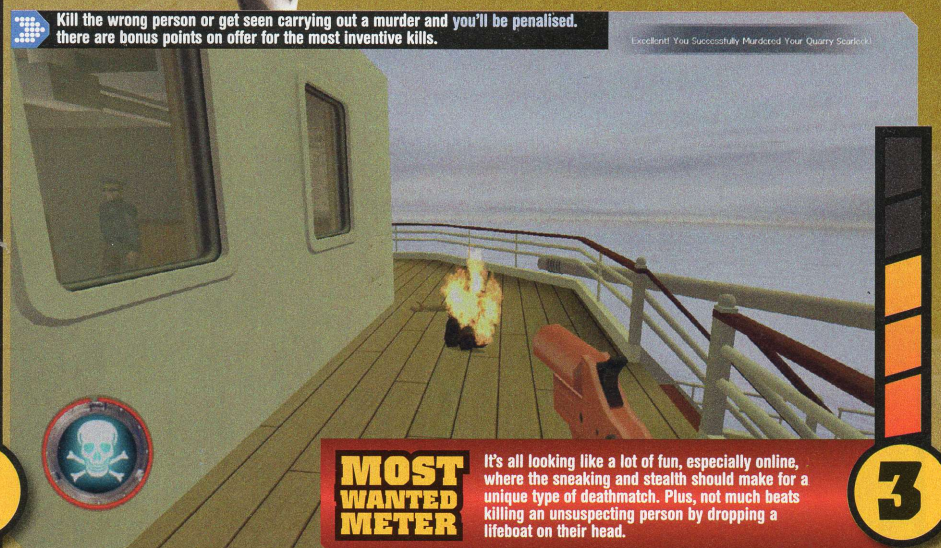
This is no run-and-gun affair, though. Your goal is to track a specific target and plot their demise, preferably keeping it stealthy to avoid getting banged up in the ship's nick.

At the start of each match you're told which player you need to murder. While you go about trying to find them then get them away from the security cameras and ship guards in order to polish them off, you also need to consider the fact that you're the target for someone else too. That means keeping an eye out for anyone acting suspiciously around you.

As well as the cat and mouse gameplay, there are *Sims* style elements as well. You need to take time out to take care of your hunger, need for the toilet and so on (which must surely be a first for a videogame). The eight-map multi-player game will be available to download through Steam, just like *Half-Life 2* in July. The full retail version is due in September, complete with a proper single-player mode, too. Definitely one to keep your spy glass poised on. GM

It's not long before you think everyone's out to kill you.

Kill the wrong person or get seen carrying out a murder and you'll be penalised. there are bonus points on offer for the most inventive kills.



MOST WANTED METER

It's all looking like a lot of fun, especially online, where the sneaking and stealth should make for a unique type of deathmatch. Plus, not much beats killing an unsuspecting person by dropping a lifeboat on their head.

3

GM MOST WANTED

■ OUT: OCTOBER ■ DEVELOPER: NEVERSOFT ■ PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
■ FORMAT: PC PSP 360 PS3

TONY HAWK'S PROJECT 8

Like the Magnificent 7, but better.

Isn't the Birdman getting on a bit by now? Well, yes – but then again, he's licensed to Activision for the next decade, so they might as well keep using him. Besides, for this next-gen extravaganza, Activision are promising great new things. Instead of simply tweaking the existing games and sticking in a couple of improbable tricks – as in earlier installments – they're claiming that this version's been reworked from the ground up.

Take Tony's legs, for instance – now they'll operate completely independently of his arms, making for more natural animation as he does tricks with his lower body while reacting to the way he's balancing with his upper torso. It'll have full-body scans of Tony and his crew, as well as motion-captured tricks. This also means you'll have more control when you bail – whether you're trying to minimise the damage you inflict on yourself, or deliberately smash your own limbs in the new 'ragdoll bail' bonus game.

In gameplay terms, it's grittier stuff – instead of pulling dumbass stunts with Bam and the gang, you're trying to impress Tony enough to join his new gang (the Project 8 in the title). That means proper street-skating, keeping up with photographers while you're busting out your bust tricks and impressing pedestrians by grinding past them. It looks impressive – we reckon Tony's going to be skating for a while yet... GM

Check out this loser on the left! He can't even keep his feet on the board! Seriously, though – *Project 8* features the sickest skaters ever.

Flick! Look at that lower-body animation as we hop on a box.

Grr! Hold the grind, and watch arms flail for balance. Bowser!

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?

The eighth game in the *Tony Hawk's* series – after being a *THUG* and wandering through an *American Wasteland*, the Hawkster's decided to go old-school by forming the best skate team in the world.

FACTS

- One huge, loading-pause-less environment
- A rebuilt physics system

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

Tony Hawk's American Wasteland	80%
Tony Hawk's Underground 2	83%

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ The classic *Hawk* challenges
+ Wowing the crowds with your skills

GM HATES
- Gettting punched in the stomach by pedestrians just for crashing into them.

MOST WANTED METER Could this be the reinvention we've been hankering for? It's certainly pretty. Fingers crossed!

4

■ OUT: OCTOBER ■ DEVELOPER: GO TOYS ■ PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION ■ FORMAT: GBA DS Wii

TONY HAWK'S DOWNHILL JAM

Is the Hawkster *really* going downhill?

First things first: this isn't your traditional *Tony Hawk's*. Instead, it's like *Hawk's* meets *SSX* – as the title suggests, you spend most of the game hurtling down a hill amassing combo points and grabbing items. The emphasis is on speed and danger, with plenty of traffic and plate glass windows to crash through as you hurtle, street-luge style, through the streets of (say) Rio De Janeiro.

It's simpler than earlier *Hawk's* games, but that's because the controls are trickier, using the remote-style controller's tilt sensitivity. You angle the controller like you'd tilt an actual board, holding it in the classic NES pose and using the A and B buttons for jumps and grabs. Obviously, this takes a bit of getting used to – on our first go, we spent five minutes clattering into walls and falling flat on our faces in front of the Activision team. Get the hang of it, though, and it's a very intuitive system – in fact, Activision even claim that with the sensitivity cranked up, it's possible to play *Downhill Jam* by strapping the controller to a real skateboard. That sounds like utter madness, but, you know what? It sounds like utter brilliance too. Only time and hands-on play will tell... GM

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?

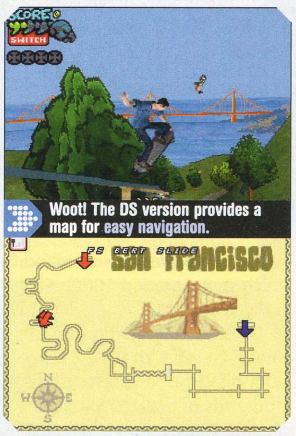
A departure from the traditional *Hawk's* games using the Wii controller for faster, more traffic-intensive skating.

FACTS

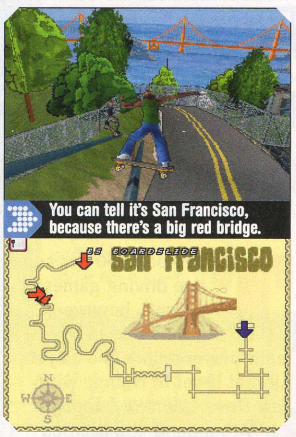
- Eight pro skaters
- Eight levels, including Rio De Janeiro and Machu Picchu, with more than 90 locations to explore

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

X-Men: The Official Game	54%
Quake 4	80%



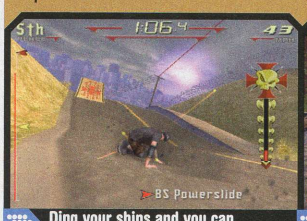
Woot! The DS version provides a map for easy navigation.



You can tell it's San Francisco, because there's a big red bridge.

ABANDON ALL SLOPE

With the controls proving a bit trickier to use than normal, *Hawk's*-style precision'll take a while. But that's not to say you can't look impressive to the ladies in the meantime...



Ding your shins and you can exaggerate for sympathy points.

Just don't slam head-on into a tram. We saw it in *Coronation Street*, once.

Aaaah! If this many sparks come off a normal grind, you'll probably end up going blind. Still, it all looks very fast, doesn't it?

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Shaking the controller to speed up
+ Taking wide turns like in *Lords of Dogtown*

GM HATES
- Looking like a goon before working out how to use the controller properly

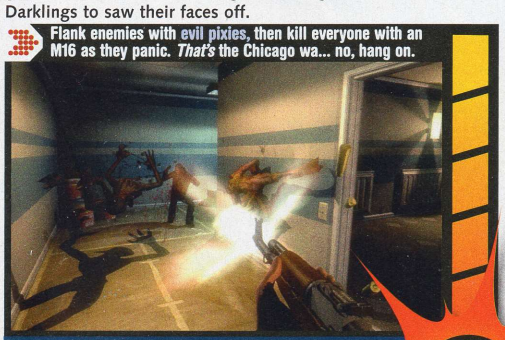
MOST WANTED METER It's not looking as essential as some *Hawk's* games, but it's nice to see Wii technology used well.

3

THE DARKNESS

■ FROM: 2K GAMES ■ OUT: TBC
360 PS3

This one's typical FPS stuff – except that, as well as shooting people, you've got the option of eviscerating them with your giant tentacles, or summoning evil little goblins known as Darklings to saw their faces off.



Flank enemies with evil pixies, then kill everyone with an M16 as they panic. *That's* the Chicago wa... no, hang on.

MOST WANTED METER The comic's great and the premise – your powers feed off the dark, so you'll have to shoot out lights and stay out of the sun – should present some interesting tactical decisions.

5

POKEMON MYSTERIOUS DUNGEON

■ FROM: NINTENDO ■ OUT: NOVEMBER GBA DS

This multiformat release – it's called *Blue Rescue Force* on the DS and *Red* on the GBA – sees you turned into a Pokemon and forced to wander around rescuing new Pokechums.

If we turned into a Pokemon, we'd be terrified of a child catching us in a ball and making us fight our friends.

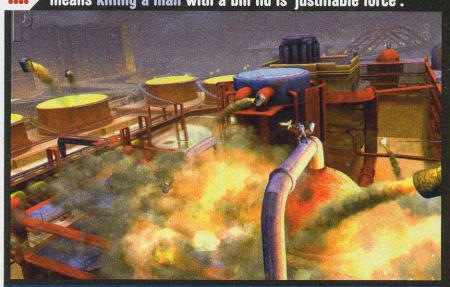
MOST WANTED METER It looks nice, but do you honestly need another *Pokemon* game in your life? In the shadow of *Pokemon Battle Revolution* on the Wii, this looks a bit lacking.

2

CRACKDOWN

■ FROM: REAL TIME WORLDS ■ OUT: TBC
360

One of the most ambitious *GTA*-style games around, *Crackdown* sees you playing a cross between Judge Dredd and Agent Smith – a speed-sprinting, concrete-punching badass sworn to uphold the law by any means necessary.



'Any means necessary' is the credo in *Crackdown*. That means killing a man with a bin lid is 'justifiable force'.

MOST WANTED METER Huge scope for environmental improvisation – hitting enemies with posts or bin lids – combined with destruction that *lasts* after you've caused it makes this a keeper.

4

■ OUT: SEPTEMBER ■ DEV: NINTENDO ■ PUB: NINTENDO
■ FORMAT: DS

Ah, we never do, ROB. Expect more elaborate buildings and the chance to prod Slippy the frog with the stylus – both things are very welcome.

STARFOX DS

It's already looking foxy!

How great does this sound? Classic *Starfox* – dogfighting across lush green fields and ignoring that irritating frog's cries for help – except that you can also use the touch screen to plot where your wingmen and you are going to go. Neat, eh?

Branching storyline missions see you helping Lylat in a new galactic conflict, but this time you're making tactical decisions and advancing strategically across the map with that arrogant rabbit at your side. All that, *and* there's eight-way dogfighting on a local connection, or four-way online fun. GM

MOST WANTED METER If this isn't a must-have, we'll eat our own legs – eight-player dogfighting alone's got the potential to be a *Mario Kart* beater. Welcome back, Fox – we forgive you for making all those duff cameos now. Just about. If you're lucky.

4

■ OUT: CHRISTMAS ■ DEVELOPER: GEARBOX STUDIOS ■ PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT
■ FORMAT: PC PS3

BROTHERS IN ARMS

Operation 'Market Garden' *sounded* so friendly...

Our favourite current buzz-word? 'Bro-Mos'. That's Gearbox's abbreviation for 'Brotherhood Moments' – non-scripted outbreaks of teamwork between the allied soldiers designed to make you feel loyal to your brethren and blub when they die. Unlike *Medal Of Honour's* set-pieces, these aren't pre-planned – instead, soldiers will randomly fall over or jam their guns, then be helped out by other soldiers.

They aren't completely useless, of course – another nice new feature is the ability to 'order' them to jump, so that they can find cover and traverse scenery more easily. And, just in case you're wondering, there *will* still be plenty of spectacular set-pieces – our favourite moment from the E3 demo we saw last month was the Nazis blowing up a church which actually ended up providing us with cover, which has great potential for on-the-hoof strategising while you play. Oh, and did we mention that you can use two guns at once now, too? A little delayed after the advent of Dual Wielding in *Halo 2*, perhaps, but otherwise just super-duper. GM

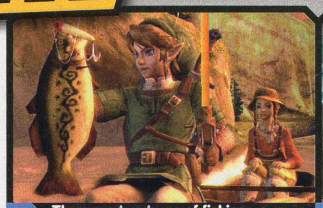
Look at those troops cuddling together while you fling grenades just past their ears. That's 'Bro-Mos' in full effect for you.

MOST WANTED METER Another solid-looking sequel from the franchise that keeps shooting *Medal of Honour* full of holes. We're not keen on all the industry slang – looking around in vehicles is called 'Cinematic Seamlessness' – but this still looks lovely.

4

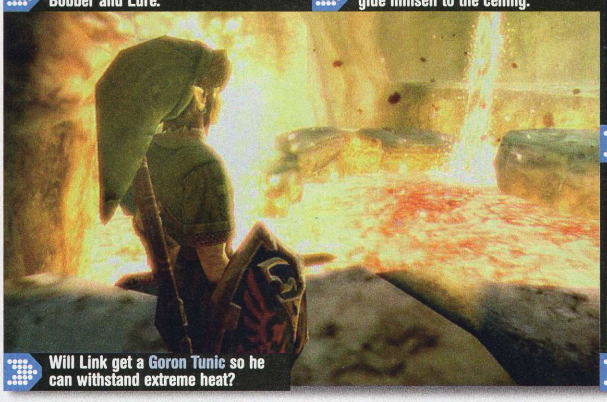
HYRULE THE WORLD

The most impressive thing about new *Zelda* is how the Wii nunchuk works with the swordplay. But even if you're going to be playing it on 'Cube, Link's got plenty of exciting abilities to keep you going...

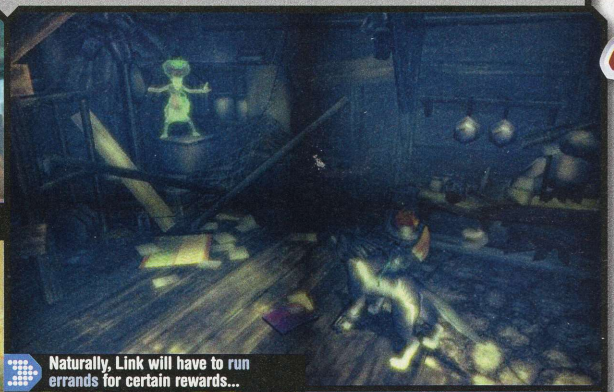


There are two types of fishing – Bobber and Lure.

Link can use his special boots to glue himself to the ceiling.



Will Link get a Goron Tunic so he can withstand extreme heat?



Naturally, Link will have to run errands for certain rewards...

Wolf Link's abilities have yet to be properly revealed.

Link gets to ride Epona from the start of the game, as he lives on a ranch.

OUT: NOVEMBER **DEVELOPER:** NINTENDO **PUBLISHER:** NINTENDO
FORMAT: CUBE WII

ZELDA Twilight Princess

New shots of Wii's biggest game yet!

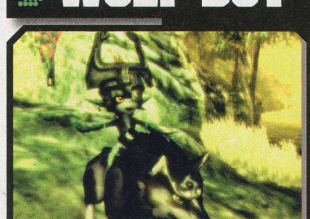
Twilight Princess has had a chequered history so far, being delayed interminably. The reasons? It's bigger than *Ocarina of Time* – rumour puts the game at around the 100-hour mark – and, of course, the game is coming to new wonder-console Wii...

NATIONAL ELF

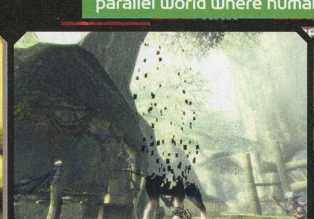
Of course, with a fully-grown, horse-loving Link on board, *Zelda* was looking impressive even on GameCube, long before it was confirmed for Wii. But with the nunchuck controller almost fully implemented, it's on another level – you're actually controlling little Link, whether he's murdering monsters or simply having a pleasant fish in his boat. Story details are still a bit sketchy – for instance, we've been told that the only reason Link starts the game as a cowboy is to rationalise his skill with a steed – but everything else about this one looks astonishing. See for yourself...

WOLF BOY

So what's with Link's lupine alter ego? Well, whenever he crosses into the 'Twilight Realm' – a parallel world where humans can't exist – Link gets all fangy and furry.

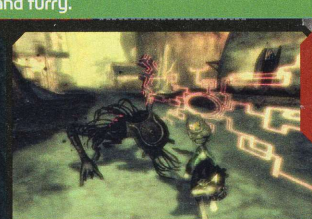


Link teams up with Midna, the little chap on his back. Or is it a girl?



We don't yet know if you can switch realms on a whim...

The Twilight Realm is 'taking over' but what does that mean?



Are these weird things other people who've gone into the Twilight Realm?

HANDS ON

PREVIEWER: Joel

HOW FINISHED? 3%

WE PLAYED IT AT...
The very lovely E3 extravaganza in Los Angeles

WHAT WE PLAYED
- ✔ Fightin'!
- ✔ Fishin'!
- ✔ Shooting with the bow
- ✔ Exploring a dungeon

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

Fishing was fun. The bow worked well. But we need to play the main game more to see if the nunchuck and remote work for normal and prolonged play. Shaking to perform a spin attack is novel, but 20 hours in will we just want to press a button?

ANY PROBLEMS?

Does the fact that this was designed for a standard pad mean the Wii controller bits are a bit tagged-on?

BEST BIT SO FAR

Using Link's finishing blow – stabbing the controller downwards makes the pointy-eared chap jam his sword through an enemy's ribs with a satisfying sort of nastiness.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Using the Wii controller for fishing and aiming our arrows

GM HATES
– Not being able to tell how well combat works with the Wii controller until we play more

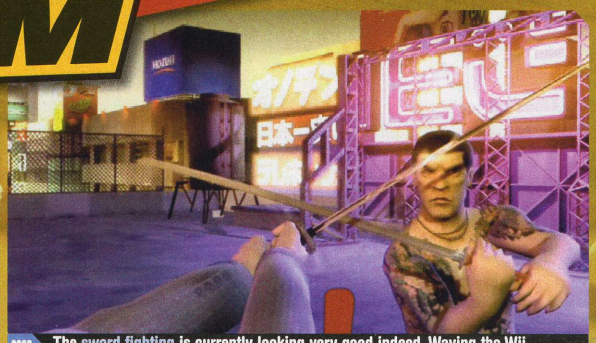
MOST WANTED METER 5

Sure to be classic on Cube, but we need more time with the Wii version to see if it's the best *Zelda* yet.

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: ..... Wind Waker
BIGGEST RIVAL: ..... Red Steel
OUT SOONER: ..... Okami

NSPCC
Don't hide it. FULL STOP.
Registered charity number 216401
If you've been sexually abused, you don't have to hide it any more.
Angry? Scared? Lonely? There's no need to put on a brave face. When you're ready, there are now several ways to contact someone who cares, will believe you and can help make it stop. Visit donthideit.com or text ADVICE to 60022 or call ChildLine.
ChildLine
0800 1111

GM MOST WANTED



The sword fighting is currently looking very good indeed. Waving the Wii controller around like a tiny plastic katana is more fun than *Deal Or No Deal*.

OUT: TBA **DEV:** UBISOFT **PUB:** UBISOFT
FORMAT: Wii

RED STEEL

It's better to be red than dead!

While we'll bet Geraint's collection of toenail clippings that *Metroid Prime 3* will make superb use of Wii's unique controller, Red Steel arguably has more to prove due to it being the first third-party first-person shooter on the system.

SHOOT TO THRILL

While this tale of a lone American going up against the Yakuza to rescue hs girlfriend has a few control issues at the moment – namely the fact that the gun aiming is a little twitchy and over-sensitive – it's shaping up to be a solid and potentially exciting action title. In particular, the ability to swordfight is currently looking like the strongest element of the game, with controller-waving translated brilliantly into brutal sword chops and slashes.

It's the little details that impress, too, such as destructible scenery (even if some items are curiously un-smashable) and the 'honour' system that allows you to disarm an enemy and make them surrender. There's work to do but we're definitely excited. GM

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?

First-person shooter that uses the Wii controller to wave your gun around.

FACTS

- Two distinct gameplay styles – shooting and swordplay
- You can make enemies surrender rather than killing them

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

Splinter Cell: Chaos Theory	93%
Prince of Persia: Two Thrones	79%

Special abilities let you pick off enemies in slow-motion.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Waving the Wii controller around is ace!
+ The swordplay in particular is great fun

GM HATES
- Aiming the gun is currently too sensitive
- Inconsistently destructible scenery

MOST WANTED METER If the controls get sorted, this could rival *Metroid Prime 3* for guns-blazing game-bliss. **3**

OUT: NOV **DEVELOPER:** RARE **PUBLISHER:** MICROSOFT
FORMAT: 360

VIVA PIÑATA

The eyes! The eyes! Make them stop staring!

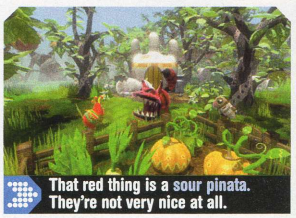
We're a little bit in love with this. The silly voices, the none-more-cute animals (except for the terrifying staring eyes) and the whole *Animal Crossing* meets *Harvest Moon* meets *The Sims* gameplay. That and the fact that, visually, this is Rare at their very best. Just look at it! Impressive, eh?

A well-kept garden that's positively bursting with wildife. If you take care of your leafy wonderland, then it'll hopefully look something like this.

GARDEN PARTY

The game's all about creating and maintaining a beautiful garden in order to attract pinatas, of which there are over 60. Once you've attracted some, you'll need to nurture and care for them, and you can customise them too (we especially like the huge buck teeth you can give 'em). Tending to their needs make them happier and they'll even start a family if they're happy enough – but you'll need to watch our for invading, troublemaking 'sour' pinatas. Online, you can visit friends' gardens and interact with their own unique Pinata community – or even send rowdy 'ruffians' and sour pinatas to make a nuisance of themselves.

There's much more to the game than space allows us to describe here, but the more we see of it, the deeper and more charming it appears to be. GM



That red thing is a sour pinata. They're not very nice at all.

FAMILY!

It's all very well keeping your garden nice and neat and attracting pinatas, but you've got to make sure the beasties are going to pass on the family name, as it were. Get two happy animals and they might just settle down together and drop a sprog, which is definitely good news for your garden...

A pair of pinatas boogie the night away, as they're jolly happy.

A night of hot dancing should lead to baby pinatas! We're confused too.

NEED TO KNOW?

WHAT IS IT?

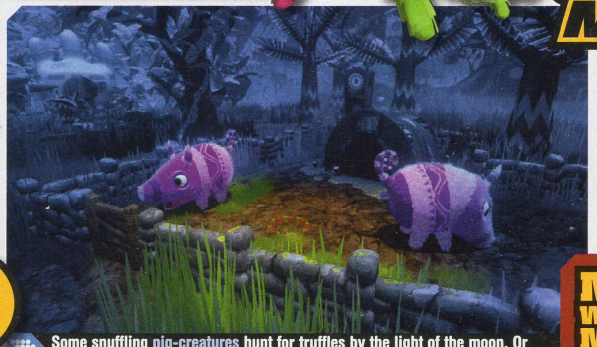
A nurturing game where you maintain a garden and the things that live in it.

FACTS

- Over 60 pinatas, each attracted by different garden elements
- Online mode for *Animal Crossing*-style garden visits

FROM THE PEOPLE WHO MADE...

Perfect Dark Zero	85%
Kameo	82%



Some snuffling pig-creatures hunt for truffles by the light of the moon. Or they might just be about to make a break for freedom.

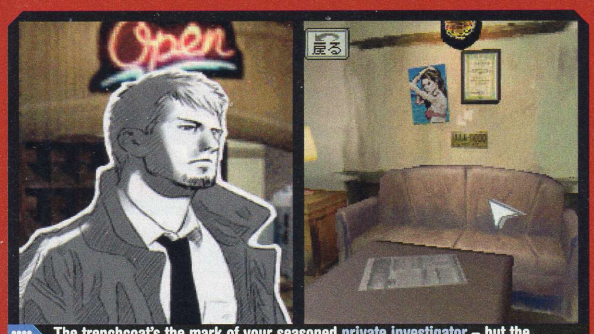
GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ The pinatas. They're so very adorable!
+ Creating your own garden is great fun

GM HATES
- Those eyes. They're a bit bleedin' scary
- Might not appeal to more mature gamers

MOST WANTED METER Next-generation animal nurturing that is a treat for both the eyes and the brain. **4**

OUT: OCTOBER • DEV: CING • PUB: NINTENDO
FORMAT: DS



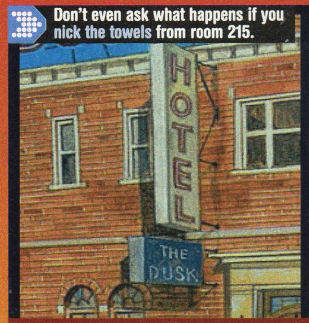
The trenchcoat's the mark of your seasoned private investigator – but the beard's one for the ladies. Phwoooar.

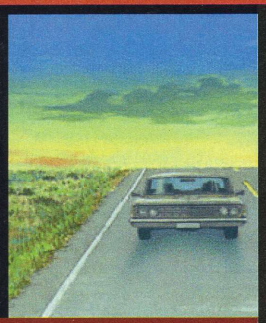
HOTEL DUSK

Time to check in!

It's 1979. You are Kyle Hynde, a cop-turned-salesman looking for an old friend. And your investigation's led you to a hotel with a room that makes wishes come true...

Looking super-noir next to the usual collection of bubbly handheld fare, *Hotel Dusk's* most interesting innovation is that you hold the DS *sideways* like a book. The control system's relatively simple point-'n-click stuff, using the touch screen to look for clues, and designed to allow DS noobs to get immersed in what's looking like one of the more interesting games on the horizon. Promising. GM





Don't even ask what happens if you nick the towels from room 215.

MOST WANTED METER This is what the DS does best – stylish, text-heavy games which wouldn't quite work on any other format. We've yet to see what level of complexity we can expect from the puzzles, but for sheer creepy atmosphere, this looks stunning.

4

OUT: TBC • DEVELOPER: SIERRA GAMES • PUBLISHER: VIVENDI UNIVERSAL
FORMAT: PS2 XBOX PC

SCARFACE

THE WORLD IS YOURS

First you get the cojones, then the rage...

Two words: 'balls meter'. That's right – the more stupid, dangerous things you do in *Scarface*, the quicker Tony's, um, *cojones* kick into gear. When his balls are completely full, he'll go into Blind Rage mode where you'll briefly jump into first-person view, as well as getting invincibility and infinite ammo. The game kicks off with the perfect opportunity to practice this, showing Tony surviving the insane gun battle from the end of the film as he goes scenery-chewing nutso, firing off grenade launchers and shotguns. Mental.

Apart from that, this is pretty standard *GTA*-clone stuff – Tony can press himself against walls for cover, jack cars to get around, intimidate people and then stamp on their heads. There's a smattering of *Godfather*-style empire management too – Tony can hire goons to do his dirty work, as well as taking over businesses. In an early trailer, he's shown whacking people from a video-fronting operation, though later in the game we're sure he'll be back to his drug-peddling ways. Since it was only shown in video form at E3, it's difficult to say how well it works, or whether the promise of 'no pauses, no loading times' is actually true. Apparently Ricky Gervais is doing some voice work on it, too, which is... *interesting*. Yes. GM

Tony surveys one of his properties – before snorting a line of nose-flour and going on a bug-eyed killing rampage. Yesterday.

MOST WANTED METER Any *GTA*-style game's got a lot to live up to, and we're sort of braced for this to be a huge disappointment, with about half a dozen identical games already out there. That said, it could surprise us...

3

ELITE BEAT AGENTS

FROM: NINTENDO • OUT: OCTOBER
FORMAT: DS

If the incomprehensible story put you off importing the glorious *Osu! Tatakae! Ouendan!*, then you're in luck – Nintendo are working on a western version with a new soundtrack, new scenarios and slightly refined motivational cheer-goons. The gameplay remains the same, though (ie, really bloody hard).

"Elite beat agents, ma'am. Heard you needed some rhythmic cheer." If only real life was like this, eh?

MOST WANTED METER The only confirmed song so far is Stereogram's *Walkie Talkie Man*, but as long as Nintendo don't completely scuff the playlist, this should be furiously addictive.

4

GANGS OF LONDON

FROM: LONDON STUDIOS • OUT: OCTOBER
FORMAT: PSP

Packing more pocket-sized tastiness than a bag of pork scratchings, Sony's *Getaway* spin-off isn't just about shooters and motors. Though the main game's a third-person shooter, it lets you hop between members of your gang mid-scuffle, as well as jacking cars to explore London.

One little-known fact about the Shadwell Terriers is that they all wear the same leather jacket. It's murder to find.

MOST WANTED METER If Sony have learned some lessons from the last two *Getaways*, this should be exactly the sort of brutality we're after. You can even expand your 'manor' in multi-player.

4

TRAXION

FROM: LUCASARTS • OUT: OCTOBER
FORMAT: PSP

Traxion offers more than 20 minigames that'll work with whatever MP3s you've got stored on your PSP – from *Lumines*-style block-breaking puzzlers to beat-based beat-'em-ups. We'll be seeing how well it works with our extensive collection of Eurovision hits, don't you worry.

Twirling down a corridor of music-shaped eye candy? That's what you do, although this is the, er, logo. Cough.

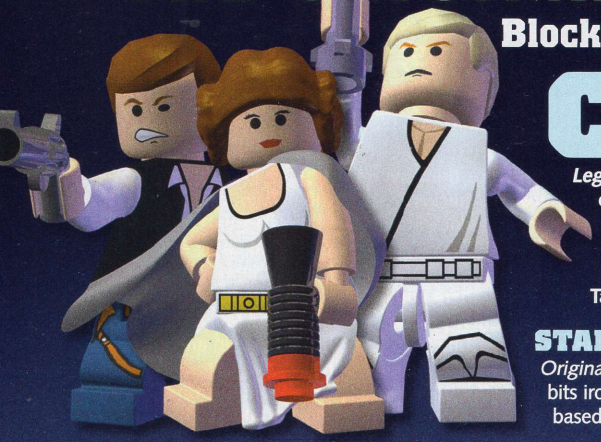
MOST WANTED METER Finally – a *Vib Ribbon*-style game for a handheld that's perfectly suited to them. Our only worry is that, with so many games on offer, quite a few of them are certain to be rubbish.

3

GM MOST WANTED

OUT: OCTOBER **DEVELOPER:** TRAVELLER'S TALES, AMAZE
PUBLISHER: LUCASARTS **FORMAT:** PS2 XBOX CUBE GBA PC DS PSP

LEGO STAR WARS II
THE ORIGINAL TRILOGY



Block-rockin' treats!

Chances are you, the intelligent, cultured and – may we say – *attractive* reader of this magazine, were one of the people who played *Lego Star Wars* and went, 'well, this is excellent, but why didn't they do it with the original films? You know, the ones that were *actually good*?' Well, slow down there, space-genius – Traveller's Tales are way ahead of you.

STARSTRUCK

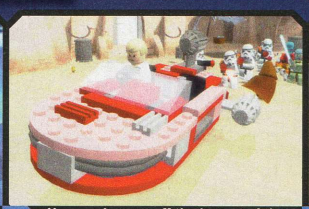
Original Trilogy's been tweaked and had its bad bits ironed out to create a symphony of brick-based mayhem. Take the vehicle bits, for instance – previously a bit linear, now they operate like the rest of the game, with lots of secret things to discover and opportunities to backtrack or explore. Or the new building skills – since Jedi are few and far between, every character can now use piles of bricks to make vehicles, bridges or platforms with their bare hands.

There's also a greater array of characters to use – Darth Vader, for instance, can force-strangle people, while Chewbacca can lift them up in the air and tear their arms off. But the best thing of all? In classic Lego style, you'll be able to combine bits from any character you've earned into one Frankenstein-like super-soldier. Fancy seeing Greedo's head on Han's body? Or Emperor Palpatine in Princess Leia's gold bikini? You sicko. But we wouldn't blame you. GM

OBI WAN THAT I WANT

Once you've earned certain characters, you'll be able to play special new bits – you can help Ben Kenobi out in his fight against Darth Vader.

Down the exhaust pipe! We're gonna need a bigger boat! And so on.



You can bounce off the bonnet of the speeder to reach high platforms.

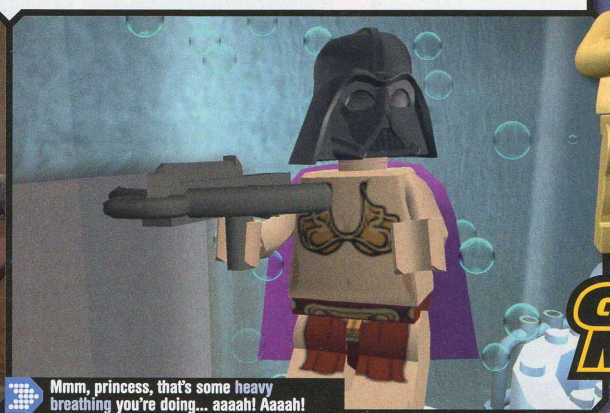
Han's having a great time. Why hasn't he had his own game yet?

He looks a little camp for an Imperial officer, doesn't he?

LUKE BACK IN ANGER

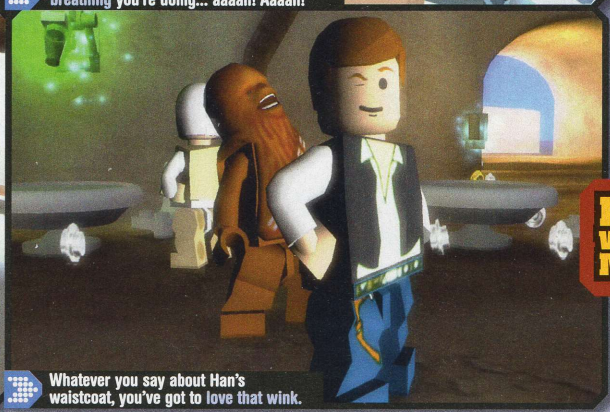
There's something magical about watching the little Lego men recreate *Star Wars* – without voices, they're forced to do all their emoting with facial expressions and hand gestures. And now all the original crew is back...

Imagine if you could build an AT-ST in seconds – out of bricks – in real life.



Mmm, princess, that's some heavy breathing you're doing... aaaah! Aaaah!

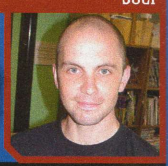
You'll even be able to play as old Bumface here, and shove Luke around.



Whatever you say about Han's waistcoat, you've got to love that wink.

HANDS ON

PREVIEWER: Joel



HOW FINISHED?

WE PLAYED IT AT...
E3

WHAT WE PLAYED
- ✔ Most of Episode IV
- ✔ Character generation
- ✔ The dogfight above the Death Star

HOW DOES IT PLAY?

It's designed for youngsters but fun for everyone – because you can't actually die (well, not more than temporarily) , it's probably the least frustrating game we've ever played. If you think that's going to make it easy, though, you're thinking wrong, nerf-herder – there's a plastic-studded treasure trove of extra stuff to unlock for dedicated Jedi. It'll take you months.

ANY PROBLEMS?

We haven't seen any of *Return Of The Jedi* yet – so the Ewoks could be rubbish – and Traveller's Tales refuse to comment on whether they've left in Lucas's sacrilegious 'Greedo shoots first' revisionism. We're watching you, boys.

BEST BIT SO FAR

Watching the little Lego men 'act' without talking – the 'these aren't the droids you're looking for' bit is even more comical than normal.

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Quick-building ourselves an entire AT-ST and creating havoc
+ Blasting Stormtroopers

GM HATES
- Seeing bikini-Leia with a Gamorrean Guard's head. It sort of makes us feel dirty

MOST WANTED METER Charming, witty and supremely enjoyable *Star Wars* fun – the novelty still hasn't worn off. **4**

CAN'T WAIT?

MOST LIKE: .....Lego Star Wars
BIGGEST RIVAL: ...Empire At War: .....Forces Of Corruption
OUT SOONER: .....Shadow Strike

BOMBERMAN ACT: ZERO

FROM: KONAMI • OUT: AUTUMN 2006
FORMAT: 360

It has to be said, when it was first announced the latest *Bomberman* of the series stood out to us for all the wrong reasons. We couldn't quite believe Hudson had taken the cute but deadly Bomberman and turned him into a dark, futuristic mech-a-like.

There are 99 different mazes to battle it out against other Bombermen. The longest to survive is the winner.

MOST WANTED METER 3

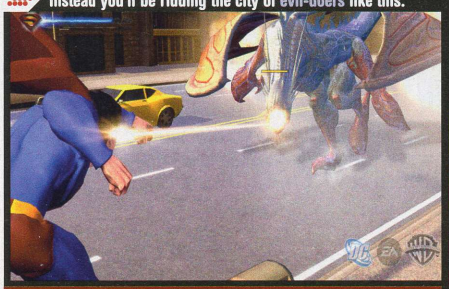
Bomberman turning dark and indulging in gladiatorial-like combat? We were sceptical at first but there's no denying the series could do with freshening up.

SUPERMAN RETURNS: THE VIDEOGAME

FROM: EA • OUT: Q3 2006
FORMAT: PS2 XBOX DS PSP 360

The Man of Steel is back! The game features a massive free-roaming (and flying) Metropolis packed with people, as well as super villains that will more than test Superman's powers.

Unlike Spider-Man, you won't be having to save civilians. Instead you'll be ridding the city of evil-doers like this.



MOST WANTED METER 3

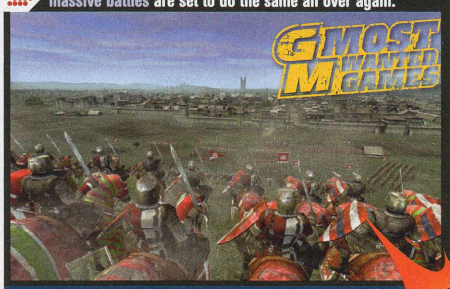
Graphically it's not the most awe-inspiring, although the flying effects are neat, especially when you kick in the 800mph super-speed. But better than *Spidey?* We'll see.

MEDIEVAL 2: TOTAL WAR

FROM: SEGA • OUT: WINTER 2006
FORMAT: PC

Surely no one could have missed last year's *Rome: Total War* – the epic daddy of strategic games. *Medieval 2* is its successor, and spanning four and a half centuries, this empire-building battle-fest will once again feature hundreds of unit types and over 10,000 troops.

They took our breath away in *Rome: Total War* and the massive battles are set to do the same all over again.



MOST WANTED METER 5

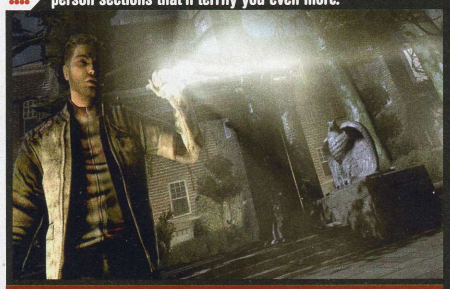
It took over our lives last year and it's almost certainly going to do the same again. Bigger and better with even more troops and enemies, plus even more multi-player modes.

ALONE IN THE DARK

FROM: ATARI • OUT: AUTUMN 2006
FORMAT: PC 360 PS3

Alone In The Dark is still shrouded in much secrecy although some gameplay details have emerged since E3. You play as mainstay character Edward Carnby, who begins the game being duffed up by thugs. Things inevitably get worse even once you eventually arm yourself with a gun, as things start going paranormal and vile creatures appear from nowhere.

Played predominantly in third-person, there are also first-person sections that'll terrify you even more.



MOST WANTED METER 4

Next-gen *Alone In The Dark* is looking great. Characters to interact with, puzzles to solve, monsters to kill and even cars to drive around in – it could rival *Alan Wake* for scares.

MOH: AIRBORNE

FROM: EA • OUT: Q4 2006
FORMAT: PS2 XBOX 360 PS3

There should be at least two reasons why you should be more excited about *Medal of Honor: Airborne* than you would be about just another *MOH* instalment. The airborne aspect makes for some very different gameplay, as you'll be able to choose the location you start in each level, choosing when to jump and controlling your parachute to drift down wherever you like.

If the whole game looks as good as this on next-gen machines, we'll be very happy Nazi bashers indeed.

MOST WANTED METER 4

It's got all the familiar *MOH* aspects along with plenty of neat new stuff, not least the ability to jump out of a plane and land wherever you like. Plus! Customisable weapons. Ooh!

STEEL HORIZONS

FROM: KONAMI • OUT: Q4 2006
FORMAT: DS PSP

An historical naval strategy game might not sound like the most exciting thing ever, but *Steel Horizons* is looking to be pretty compelling RTS stuff.

A combo of turn-based and real-time action, the game has you taking up positions in the Strategy view then unleashing hell on the enemy in Combat view. Lovely.

The Strategy view lets you move your boats into position. Then it's all-out battling in the real-time Battle screen.

MOST WANTED METER 3

Fully 3D graphics, 20 single player missions and Wi-Fi multi-player where you can take on a friend's fleet in battle. Should keep *Advance Wars* and *Field Commander* company.

CODED ARMS ASSAULT

FROM: KONAMI • OUT: 2007
FORMAT: PS3

You play as a hacker, and can unleash viruses, completely obliterate the environment and take control of some high-powered big guns in order to take out your enemies. Plus, there's four-player online co-operative multi-player, and 16-player deathmatch fun. We're quivering with excitement.

It's special effects galore as you go about taking down a variety of virtual world enemies.

MOST WANTED METER 4

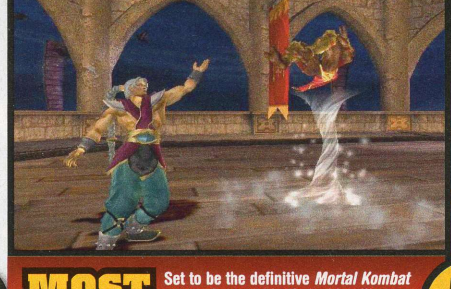
It's looking kick-ass and set in a cool virtual cyberspace where anything goes. Massive weapons, several playable characters and plenty of land and air-based vehicles. Nice!

MORTAL KOMBAT: ARMAGEDDON

FROM: MIDWAY • OUT: AUTUMN 2006
FORMAT: PS2 XBOX

We're hoping *Armageddon* will be the best *Mortal Kombat* yet, with full 3D arenas, customisable fighters and fatalities, and revamped aerial combat.

There are all sorts of special moves you can summon – each character has his or her own unique ones.



MOST WANTED METER 3

Set to be the definitive *Mortal Kombat* game, *Armageddon* is looking like a top gore-fest in both single and multi-player. Creating fatalities? That's what we've been waiting for.

COMMAND & CONQUER 4: TIBERIUM WARS

FROM: EA • OUT: 2007
FORMAT: PC

A self-replicating alien substance has infected the Earth and is spreading fast! This real-time strategy epic is looking properly next-generation with improved visuals and gameplay.

Hugely detailed cities are there just waiting for you to move your troops in and start fighting.

MOST WANTED METER 4

Strategy fans will have fond memories of *Command and Conquer*. The depth is looking to be incredible both in single player and online. A return to past glories? Let's hope.

GMOST WANTED

Each bit of mech takes independent hits – if you've got spindly arms, they're easy to shoot off.

OUT: JULY **DEV:** SEGA **PUB:** SEGA
FORMAT: 360

CHROME HOUNDS

Not as cuddly as real hounds.

WOOF!

You'll need a well-balanced team to get the tactical advantage, with several vehicle types.

Upright mechs are mobile, but have fragile legs, which can be dodgy.

Tank mechs aren't quite so nimble, they pack a lot of clout.

It wasn't the biggest game on Sega's stand at E3, but its mechs would beat Sonic in a tallness showdown any day! *Chromehounds* slings out all the dull bits of mech warfare – like toolbox tinkering – in favour of enormous metal monsters dinging each other with their shiny, shiny fists.

Interesting tactical stuff includes the presence of communication towers – capture these and you can chat to your teammates over Xbox Live for greater distances – as well as different vehicles and honking great weaponry. Apart from six-on-six multi-player, you'll also be able to play 44 single-player missions. GM

MOST WANTED METER *Chromehounds* is certainly full of drama. There's something chilling about hiding behind a building only to see it get blown to bits by a huge mech. Make sure you're hooked up to Xbox Live for this one – if you like giant robots, well, you know...

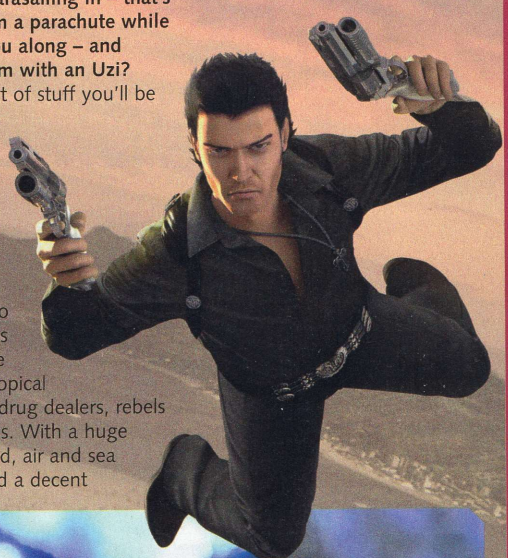
3

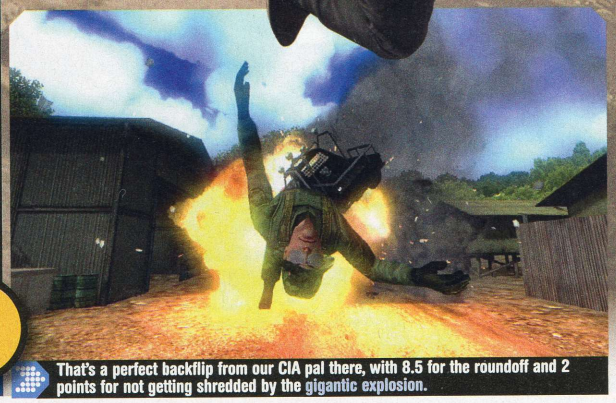
OUT: SEPTEMBER **DEVELOPER:** AVALANCHE STUDIOS
PUBLISHER: EIDOS **FORMATS:** 360 PS2 XBOX PC

JUST CAUSE

Why are you shooting at me? Just 'cause'!

Picture it – you're a government agent hired to overthrow corrupt, despotic regimes. What's the best way to pull off an assassination? Sniper rifle, maybe? Drive-by shooting? Or how about parasailing in – that's dangling from a parachute while a car tows you along – and murdering him with an Uzi? That's the sort of stuff you'll be up to in *Just Cause*. Superficially a *GTA* clone, it's actually a bit more like Activision's *Mercenaries*, leaving you to forge alliances and upset the locals on a tropical island full of drug dealers, rebels and CIA types. With a huge variety of land, air and sea vehicles – and a decent selection of guns, of course – *Just Cause* is looking great. just don't forget to pack that grappling gun and parachute. You never know when you might need them... GM

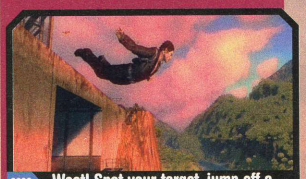




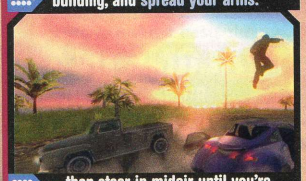
That's a perfect backflip from our CIA pal there, with 8.5 for the roundoff and 2 points for not getting shredded by the gigantic explosion.

FREEFALL

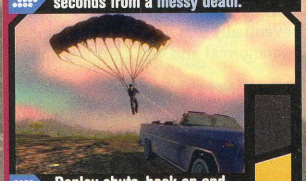
Diving off things and onto other things plays a key part in being a successful CIA goon. We never saw Agent Cody Banks do *this*. Vertigo sufferers, naturally, had best beware.



Woot! Spot your target, jump off a building, and spread your arms.



...then steer in midair until you're seconds from a messy death.



Deploy chute, hook on and enjoy the ride. In theory.

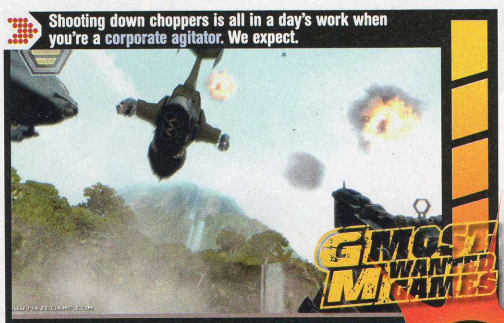
MOST WANTED METER Well, arguably regime change isn't something the CIA should really be getting up to... but we'll leave the politics of that one to Noam Chomsky. Will this be as good as *Mercenaries 2?* Could be better...

4

HAZE

FROM: FREE RADICAL DESIGN **OUT:** TBC
FORMAT: 360

The *TimeSplitters* people are getting a bit more serious for their next FPS, a high-tech shooter set in near-future South Africa. The premise is simple – you're a mercenary working for the universally-feared Mandel corporation, sent to quell a rebel uprising – but, as you'd expect, things quickly get weird...



Shooting down choppers is all in a day's work when you're a corporate agitator. We expect.

MOST WANTED METER There's little to see at the moment, but with the team behind PS2's best FPS – fact – working on *Haze*, it should be nothing short of utterly spectacular.

5

UNREAL TOURNAMENT 2007

FROM: MIDWAY **OUT:** TBA
FORMAT: 360

Reinvention's the order of the day here, with bits of *Unreal Championship* (melee-heavy combat, for instance) thrown out and other things (weapons, vehicles, AI) seriously tweaked.

Let's hope we see the return of the razor disc weapon and some nifty decapitations, eh?

MOST WANTED METER Could this be a return to the glory days of *Unreal Onslaught*? Early days, but with the glorious lighting and graphics already in place, there's plenty of time to tweak.

4

THE CLUB

FROM: REAL TIME WORLDS
OUT: TBC **FORMAT:** 360

It sounds odd, but think *SSX* with guns. Think sprinting through a building as fast as you can, gunning down men with as much style as you can. Think creating elaborately orchestrated death-combos to please the money-men upstairs, and hopefully, become the star of the unpleasant entity known as The Club. This looks evil.

MOST WANTED METER Coming from the *Project Gotham* men, this should be a rapid-fire, technically jaw-dislocating slice of extreme unpleasantness. We can't wait to see more.

5

PlayStation®2

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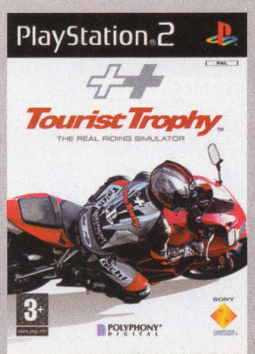

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• OUT: 24/11/06 • PRICE: £49.99 • DEVELOPER: SONIC TEAM
• PUBLISHER: SEGA • FORMAT: XBOX 360 • OTHER FORMATS: PS3
• ONLINE: VERSUS RACES WEB: WWW.SEGA.COM/SONIC • PLAYERS: 1 (1-4 ONLINE)

WORLD EXCLUSIVE!

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG™

Quick! Get your spikes out for Sonic's latest adventure...

Sometimes it's hard to be a hedgehog, your good name and reputation tarnished a little by less successful titles like *Sonic Spinball*, *R* and *Heroes*. And that's without even mentioning *Shadow*... a banned word in *GM* Towers. If ever a hedgehog had more to prove to the world, then we'd like to hear about him....

HAIR OF THE 'HOG

Thankfully those capable fellows over at Sonic Team have taken all the criticism on the chin, and have been beavering (or should that be *hedgehogging*?) away on the second coming of – arguably – gaming's most iconic figure. While *Wild Fire* on Wii is set to cater for *Sonic* traditionalists, this is the most audacious attempt yet to make *Sonic* work in 3D. And from what we've seen and played so far, this is looking like the best *Sonic* since *Rush*...

SON-LINE!

Yep, that's right – Big Blue will also be making his way onto Xbox Live in the very near future. Though we're dreaming of some kind of online co-op, expect multiplayer racing and time attack/ring-snagging challenges to prove who's the spikiest speedster out there... should be cracking.

We've played the waterfall stage to *death* – and it'll make the perfect online time trial. Trust us...

BUMPER BONUS!

Sonic's favourite food is chilli dogs. Mmm...

HIS-STORY GM LOOKS BACK AT 15 YEARS OF HEROICS!

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG — 1991

Mega Drive, Master System, Game Gear

The Green Hill and Marble Zone ditties, *that* title screen, the boss fights, the animation – everything about the Blue One's debut screamed 'CLASSIC!'. Of course!

SONIC 2 — 1991

Mega Drive, Master System, Game Gear

Sonic 2sday (November 24th, 1992) heralded the arrival of perhaps the most hyped videogame in history, but also spawned the blasphemy that was Miles 'Tails' Prower.

SONIC CD — 1993

Mega Drive, PC

Sega's Mega CD might have enjoyed a shorter shelf life than X-Factor's Steve Brookstein, but it still played home to this forgotten gem. Packed with stylish cartoony FMV, classic 'time travel' level design and a soundtrack regarded as one of the finest ever. Nicely!

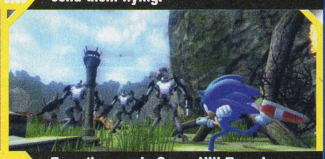
FOE-ZONE

Sonic's certainly had it easy in the past; after all, who *couldn't* duff up a bunny in a suit of armour? Now, though, Robotnik's new army of evil really means business...

BUMPER BONUS!
Sonic's birthday is the 23rd of June. Belated happy returns from GM, Big Blue!

Facing a bullet-battering from all angles, Sonic needs his devastating spin attack.

Blue can also slide into baddies to send them flying.


Even the scenic Green Hill Zone is fraught with peril...

...and we haven't even mentioned Iblis yet.

Kicking off in the good ol' Green Hill Zone – hey, where else? – Sonic's latest Adventure (and there's a reason for that capital 'A' – see Sonic R-PG boxout) certainly resembles the much-derided *Shadow*, at least in terms of looks. Thankfully, though, there's nary a loaded weapon in sight as you take down mechanised monstrosities (no cutesy animals inside, unfortunately) with some devastating combo spin attacks while grabbing each and every ring in sight.

FAST AND FURIOUS

OK, so the camera isn't perfect, and the disorientating level design can make it unclear as to where exactly you're supposed to head. But what *is* clear is that this game *shifts* – 60fps loveliness

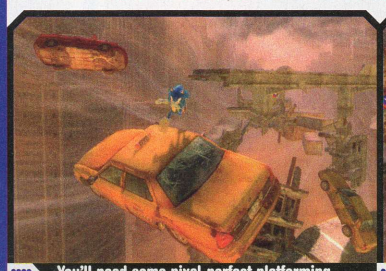
TRUE ROMANCE

It seems so sick we were almost tempted to call the RSPCA, but it seems as if *this* pretty little thing – a certain Princess Ellis – is a potential love interest for that dirty hog Sonic! Targeted by Robotnik for kidnap, it's only thanks to Silver that the plot is foiled. Blimey!

CITY SLICKER

One of next-gen *Sonic's* strength is the way you'll be able to replay levels using all three characters. Here's Sonic in Silver's level.

BUMPER BONUS!
Sonic can travel faster than the speed of sound. Now that's pretty quick!


You'll need some pixel-perfect platforming skillz to keep Sonic from falling.

But here comes a big, nasty mech who likes nothing better than squishing hedgehogs!

Strategic placement of those famous *Sonic* bumpers allows Sonic to happily hop about.

SONIC ARCADE
Arcade

1993

Sonic's only foray into the arcade scene (and his first escapade in the realm of 3D!) is a rare beast indeed. Reminiscent in style of the later *Sonic Blast*, it co-starred Mighty the armadillo (pending member of Team Knuckles) and Ray - yes, *Ray* - the squirrel. Yes, *squirrel*.

SONIC CHAOS
Master System, Game Gear

1993

Check it out! Mini-Sonic ran the show on handheld...

SONIC SPINBALL
Mega Drive, Game Gear

1993

The first of the ill-fated offshoots expanded on the casino-style pinball sections first properly introduced in *Sonic 2*. It wasn't strictly a pinball sim though, instead attempting to incorporate a spice of action-adventure. Not brilliant, to be honest.

WHERE'S SHADOW?

After the running-and-gunning debacle that was *Shadow the Hedgehog* (*GM*67: 65%), we wouldn't have been too bothered if we'd have never laid eyes on the black and red reject again. But the Team Chaos bad boy is back, and this time he's not just packing heat – he's also driving about blasting folks in what could only be described as a... warthog! Master Chief – be very afraid...

guarantees you'll never have seen a swifter *Sonic*. Grinding rails, skidding across the floor and double-jumping his way around the scenery is all adrenaline-pumping stuff, and a real throwback to those halcyon Mega Drive days.

Old faves like boxes of rings, checkpoints (complete with that iconic *ping*) and rainbow boost rings that'll hoist you aloft and guide you towards bonuses all return to keep the fanboys happy, along with the classic destructible scenery – in the form of obscurely-placed stone walls. Being hoisted aloft by a giant eagle to reach new portions of levels was a fresh (and exhilarating!) turn up for the books, though.

THRILL PILL

The second of *Sonic's* stages was purer platforming still, with our hero charging though a level teeming with waterfalls as enemy fire bore down upon him. It's very much a trial-and-error, 'one mistake spells doom' scenario, with some simple context-sensitive button presses to launch Sonic off walls and keep you on your toes. Dodging enemy bullets while desperately trying to bag a super-quick time and obtain that cherished 'A' ranking is a major rush, though, even despite the mild irritation of learning when to press your buttons.

But enough of boring old Sonic... what we were *really* interested in seeing was his silvery-haired time-travelling doppelganger – Silver.

TIME TWISTER

In marked contrast to the Greenpeace-friendly nature of Sonic's levels, the enigmatic Silver harks from the *future* – where he has the misfortune to find himself outnumbered and outgunned in a war ravaged, post-apocalyptic city. It's hardly *Sonic* territory, and even less

CRATE SCOTT!

In the future, spin attacks are a thing of the past. Meet Silver, a hog so cool he only has to *think* bad things to sort his enemies out good and proper.

BUMPER BONUS!

Sonic's sneakers were created by Professor Kintobor, a pre-evil Dr. Robotnik!

BUMPER BONUS!

An early Sonic ad campaign included the line: Sega do what Nintendon't!

HI HO SILVER

Sonic heroes traditionally spot dodgier footwear than a cheap pair of Golas, but Silver is taking the Michael with these bovver boots. We thought people from the future were supposed to be cool?

MECHIN' OUT

These evil gun-toting robos are a far cry from the cute mechs from Sonic's halcyon Mega Drive days. Luckily, Silver is more than capable of reducing them to scrap thanks to his steel-shredding brain blasts. Mmm...

CRATES!

These handy wooden boxes (emblazoned with the famous *Sonic* 'bumper' logo) are proof of the game's snazzy physics engine. Zap some psychic energy over in their general direction and watch 'em shatter!

EGG MAN

What classic *Sonic* platformer would be complete without the fiendish form of Dr. Ivo Robotnik? True to form, the moustachioed cad has raised a robot army that he plans to unleash upon the kingdom of Soliana. What *has* changed is the Eggman's appearance – notice how much more human-like he appears!

1994

SONIC 3
Mega Drive

Struggled to markedly improve on the near-perfection that was *Sonic 2* with an adventure that, while still worth 90% in our books, was shorter, plainer and less remarkable than its stellar predecessor. Chiefly memorable for the way you could play as Knuckles.

1994

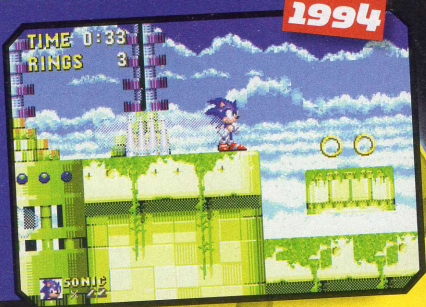
Putting Sonic in a kart... Where did they get that idea?

SONIC DRIFT
Game Gear

1994

SONIC AND KNUCKLES
Mega Drive

You could physically combine the *Sonic 3* and *Sonic and Knuckles* carts to experience the ultimate hog roast. Knuckles the echidna introduced entirely new gameplay mechanics like gliding and scaling walls, while collecting all 14 Chaos Emeralds allowed access to Hyper Sonic!



SILVER LINING

Far from a copyhog, Silver is very much a unique character. While Sonic is all about speed and jumping, and Shadow likes bullets, Silver prefers to use his bulging brain. Clever fella.

These 'bots might look more than a match for weedy Silver, but think again.

We mean, can they do *this?* Hope that's Robotnik's car. Arf!

Silver's powers can also defy gravity. That's right – *he can fly!*

Bending iron bars is also no problem for old spindly limbs.

Or even reflecting even gunfire. Seriously, Superman has *nothing* on this guy.

FLY GUY

Is it a bird? Is it a plane? No, it's Silver the Hedgehog!

Silver's levitation abilities mean he can take refuge in the skies...

Poor old groundhog Sonic isn't so lucky, however...

...having to work hard to avoid being flattened like a pancake!

CHAOS THEORY

Remember scary Godzilla-sized freak Chaos from *Sonic Adventure?* Well, this isn't him. Called Iblis, this demonic entity is the dude referred to by Silver in the E3 trailer (remember the Iblis trigger?). He looks like one hard S.O.B.

A fire-breathing pain is the ass, we reckon he'll be a boss fight to remember.

Making King Kong look like a wuss, Iblis hoists entire skyscrapers into the air.

Silver faces up to the monstrosity. Can he prevail? Surely not. But the trigger!

GM INTERVIEW

We sat down with with Sonic The Hedgehog's next-gen Dad, Masahiro Kumono, Director of Sonic Team...

GM What have you been able to do on the next-gen consoles that wasn't possible in previous *Sonics?*

MK: We can't reveal everything but it's going to be more story-based, more cinematic and much more realistic.

GM What's the best-looking thing in the new game?

MK: We've got detailed lighting and shadows on everything at a level that just wouldn't have been possible before.

GM Can you tell us more about the town levels where you select your level? Are there mini-games and challenges?

MK: This is where you'll find out more about the main storyline and also complete non-essential missions.

GM Can you tell us more about how you interact with the human characters?

MK: We can't tell you everything but maybe Sonic will visit the town to do some shopping and get some tips and information from the human characters.

GM It's Sonic's 15th birthday – how are you celebrating the anniversary in the game?

MK: Because it's the 15th anniversary of *Sonic* and also the starting point for *Sonic* on the next-gen consoles we've made the concept completely new but reused some classic stages. So you'll recognise some of your favourite stages from old Sonic games

GM At E3 2005, Sega showed a video that showed next-generation *Sonic*. Will the finished game match that video or is it expecting too much from the hardware?

MK: At that point we expected the graphics to look like that on the next-gen machines, but the final version will be better than that video, much more powerful.

GM From developing *Sonic*, which is more powerful in your opinion, Xbox 360 or PS3?

MK: We don't have all the information on PS3 yet, but maybe PS3 is going to be more powerful in the end.

GM Which level is going to blow us away with its graphics?

MK: Silver can pick up and throw nearly every object he can see, so those levels will really impress you, I hope.

GM You want the game to appeal to older audiences. How will you achieve this?

MK: This has story, multiple routes, mini games, speech. We expand the storyline and gameplay and each level has depth that older gamers will find appealing as well as the kids! The main point is that there is more reality and more humans to interact with.

1995

SONIC LABYRINTH

Game Gear

Rewrote the whole *Sonic* mythos by declaring that, should the spiky speedster lose possession of his cherished red sneakers, his fabled pace would be no more. An isometric chore-fest of a platformer that's even less fun than scraping your eyes out with a rusty dessert spoon. We'd imagine.

1996

SONIC: THE FIGHTERS

Arcade

This coin-op curio was a mental attempt to plonk the cast of *Sonic* into the *Virtua Fighter* engine. Technically, the game was a treat, but however appealing slapping seven bells out of Tails sounded in theory, it just felt lame in practice. Recently re-released as part of 2005's *Sonic Gems Collection.*

Silver's psychic cojones allow him to evade harmful objects like boulders.

hog-like when you start charging about. For starters, Silver can't spin attack or even double jump, making him about as deadly as Sonic's wimpy beau Amy. He *can*, however, use his talent for telekinesis to float for a short while. Clever fella. But that's not all...

See all that wreckage lying around? You can pick it up and chuck it at your foes with *your mind*. You can even stop enemy bullets in mid-air, before hurling them back at foes with interest! A breeze to pick up and satisfying as heck, imagine *Sonic* meets *The Matrix* meets skittles and you're almost there.

PSYCHIC SPLENDOUR

The mixture of combat and puzzling in Silver's missions appears to fall somewhere inbetween *Sonic's* platforming and *Shadow's* blasting. Add in all sorts of rumours about potential RPG-style upgrades and it becomes clear that next-gen *Sonic* is a real melting pot of gameplay styles and ideas. Is it too ambitious to come together though? We initially thought so, but after we played it for a bit our fears magically subsided. Just keep those fingers crossed, trust in Sonic Team, and exhale...

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
- Sonic's need for speed
- Silver's psychics
- Shadow (only joking!)

GM HATES
- Disorientating levels
- Basic gameplay
- Shadow!

MOST WANTED METER Can Big Blue establish a next-gen legacy that rivals his Mega Drive days? The race is on! **4**

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: .....Shadow, 65%
BIGGEST RIVAL: .....New Super Mario Bros, 90%
OUT SOONER: ..... Nothing.

SONIC R-PG

Despite fans' clamouring for a pure *Sonic* platforming experience, this next-gen effort is admittedly closer to *Adventure* than the classic Mega Drive offerings. Inbetween Sonic, Shadow and Silver's 'Action' levels lie towns, in which Sonic can chat to peeps, take on bonus missions and even upgrade his abilities! (Don't ask us what forms these might take though – Sega are keeping quiet on that one.)

What will Sonic be able to do when he goes shopping? We wait, trembling...

BUMPER BONUS!
Sonic's motto is "I don't look back, I've got no regrets", Carpe Diem!

SONIC STYLEE

Sonic has never been afraid to show us his repertoire of impossibly cool, gravity-defying moves. Now, he's more loaded with trickery than ever before. Mario – watch and learn.

So nimble he can even grind thin air. Head for the ring for major bonus pointage.

This rudimentary board allows Sonic to show those *SSX* cronies a thing or two about gnarly moves.

Thanks to 360, Sonic can leap higher, further and faster than ever before. Wii! Sorry, whee!

1996

Could Sonic dodge this isometric lava of doom?

SONIC 3D BLAST
Genesis, Saturn, Master System, Game Gear, PC

1997

SONIC R
Saturn, PC

Drastically ill-advised attempt to translate *Sonic's* insane turn of speed into a true rival to *Mario Kart*. It looked pretty enough, and featured plenty of hidden short cuts, but played like the devil's arse. Still, *Sonic* sadists were finally able to play as the megalomaniacal Dr. Robotnik... or Amy.

1998

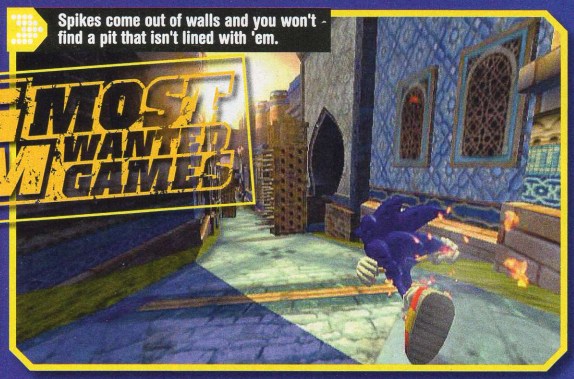
SONIC ADVENTURE
Dreamcast

Sonic has a voice? He *really* sounds that camp? Now Tails is speaking... the humanity! Still, beneath all that pseudo-RPG nonsense and a decidedly ropey camera lay a brave and engaging attempt to establish our hero in a free-roaming 3D universe. Plum.

Remember playing the sub-*Tamagotchi* Chao minigame?

OUT: TBC 2007 **DEVELOPER:** SONIC TEAM **PUBLISHER:** SEGA
ONLINE: TBC **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE

As well hurtling through the levels, expect mini games that use the Wii-mote.



Spikes come out of walls and you won't find a pit that isn't lined with 'em.

SONIC WILD FIRE

Smell melted trainer as Sonic runs Wii-ld!

***Wild Fire* goes hell for hedgehog leather to get closer to the spine-flattening speed of the 2D games than ever before. The new controller means precision has been chucked out of the window in favour of sense-assaulting pace and arcadey, reaction-based gameplay that was massive amounts of fun even in the short demo we got our hands on.**

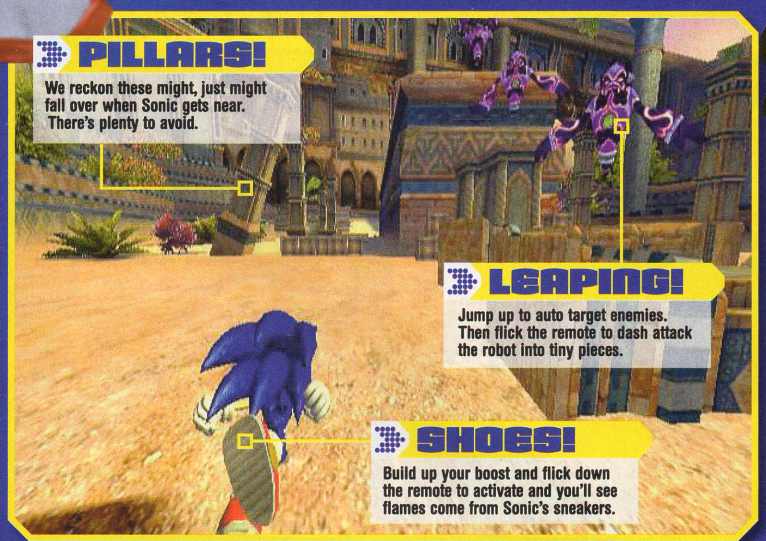
TWIST AND SHOUT

There's no toe-tapping waiting around here. Sonic bezzes it forward at all times with the Wii remote (held sideways like a pad) needing a tilt left and right to steer his spikiness through the rollercoaster-like levels. The '2' button is jump. Tapping it gives a standard curled-up leap. Holding it charges up the super jump you need to reach higher ledges. While in the air you can also lock-on to enemies and then hurtle towards them with a flick of the remote. Linking together multiple dash attacks is particularly satisfying. This is *Sonic* so there's also a speed boost, activated (when you've collected enough fire icons) with a downwards flick.You can also slow him down by tilting the remote backwards.

But you're not going to want to because this is all about speed. You hurtle along the predetermined route with your eyes and brain trying to cling onto the Hedgehog's spiky coat tails, as you try to run through tempting trails of rings, jump spike-filled gaps and smash through robo-enemies.

As well as speed-induced facial twitches, older *Sonic* and Sega fans should also prepare for a bad case of misty eyes when they see this. There's an *Arabian Nights* look to the whole game (Sonic's mission has him retrieving pages of the classic book) that's very reminiscent of legendary fan favourite *NiGHTS* on the Saturn. It's all teetering stone columns, mosaic covered courtyards and desert oasis under a blazing blue sky. This is right up there with *Super Mario Galaxy* as one of the most graphically impressive Wii games we've seen

The first solo *Sonic* game since his debut in 1991, this will have fan's hearts leaping. In fact, we reckon it'll really put the pressure on the 360/PS3 game in the race to be the best *Sonic* game yet.



GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ It's got that great 2D *Sonic* speed
+ Easy but exciting to play with the Wii remote

GM HATES
- We've only seen a bit
- You don't always feel completely in control

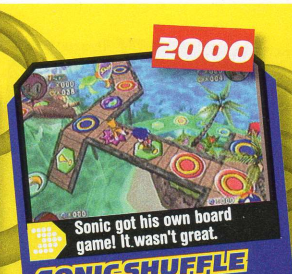
MOST WANTED METER 5

Already feels like the *right Sonic* for Wii. Sun, sand and sheer speed could make for a classic outing.

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: .....Sonic
BIGGEST RIVAL: Sonic
OUT SOONER: ...Nothing

Only about three UK gamers got to play this classic...

SONIC POCKET ADVENTURE
NeoGeo Pocket Color



Sonic got his own board game! It wasn't great.

SONIC SHUFFLE
Dreamcast

Amy Rose aside, possibly the best handheld *Sonic*.

SONIC ADVANCE
GBA

GM QUIZ ZONE

How well do you know *Sonic*? Here are 10 nefariously tricky brainteasers that'll separate the real Big Blue fanboys from the Italian plumbers in disguise...

1 What kind of creature is Knuckles?

2 What caused Cream the rabbit to cry in *Sonic Advance 2*?

3 In *Sonic Adventure*, who is known as the God of Destruction?

4 In *Sonic Heroes*, which three members comprise the Dark Team?

5 In *Sonic CD*, what is Amy's hobby?

6 In *Sonic 3D Blast*, what kind of animal is Flicky?

7 In the original *Sonic the Hedgehog*, which level must you finish twice?

8 What is the name of the cyborg hedgehog in *Sonic 2*?

9 What does Knuckles guard over?

10 What is the name of the scary dragon from the first level of *Sonic Spinball*?

Turn to page 49 to see the answers!

HOW DID YOU SCORE?

0 – Ha! A Nintendo fanboy of the worst kind. Are you Mario in disguise?
1-3 – More of a casual gamer, eh? Never mind, go and have a play on *FIFA* or something.
4-6 – Now we're getting somewhere. These questions were tricky after all!
7-9 – You really do know your Green Hill Zones from your Emerald Hill Zones don't you? Take a bow.
10 – Awesome! You win a *GM* Gold Award. Are you a member of Sonic Team in disguise?

OUT: TBC 2007 • **DEVELOPER:** BACKBONE • **PUBLISHER:** SEGA
ONLINE: VERSUS • **SPECIAL:** NO • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE
WEBSITE: WWW.SEGA.COM/SONIC • **PLAYERS:** 1 (1-4 ONLINE)

SONIC RIVALS

Sonic gets shirty on PSP...

If we *had* to pick a console tailor-made for Sonic, we'd definitely opt for PSP. After all the combination of sleek looks, powerful tech and that irresistible widescreen display is perfectly suited to Big Blue's speedy antics. Described as a 'racing platformer', *Rivals* pits our spiky pal against buddies like Shadow, Silver and Knuckles in frantic races to the finish line through classic *Sonic* environments.

In fact, glance at it casually and *Rivals* is hardly a 'racer' at all. The old *Sonic* formula – blast from left to right, spinning into enemies while frantically grabbing as many golden rings as possible – is here in its entirety. Bumpers, loop-the-loops, spin dashes and multiple routes are all here, although collecting rings will now give you a speed boost (a la *Sonic Riders*).

FISTICUFFS

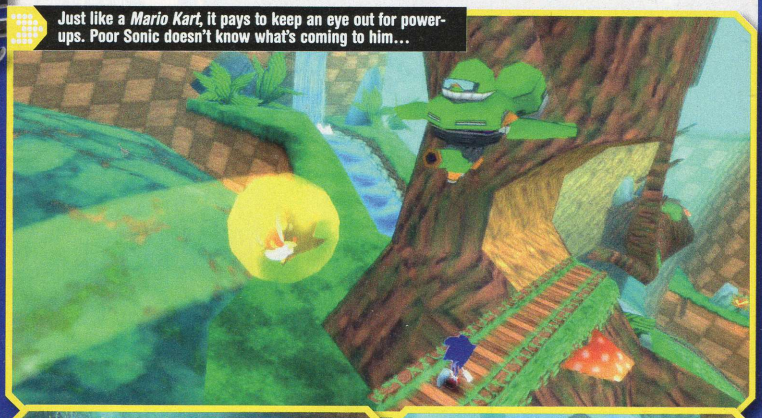
But now there's more of a competitive edge, as you manhandle, trip, and shove your rival in order to gain a competitive advantage. Some weapons with both offensive and defensive properties have also been thrown into the mix to help spice things up, so expect to drop puddles of ice in front of unsuspecting opponents and chortle as they take a tumble. This should hopefully provoke some heated exchanges and more than a few bouts of fisticuffs during the Wi-Fi multiplayer action on offer.

There's also a beefy story (each character will have their own unique story and stages), plus championship and multi-player modes. There's even a card trading mechanism chucked in.

Rivals is certainly an interesting concept – and the closest thing to an actual bona fide 'classic' *Sonic* game since *Rush* – plus (even more importantly) it's looking drop-dead gorgeous and shifting at a rate of knots. And that's all we really demand of a certain hedgehog, isn't it?

RACE RELATIONS

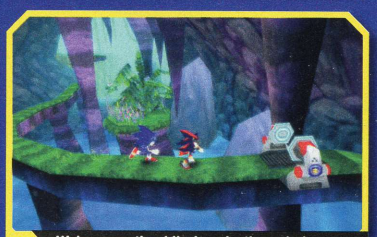
Rivals' biggest feature will undoubtedly be its Wi-Fi multi-player - picture the brilliance of the versus levels against Tails in *Sonic 2* and multiply by a factor of PSP!



Just like a *Mario Kart*, it pays to keep an eye out for power-ups. Poor Sonic doesn't know what's coming to him...

Heads up Shadow – Sonic is gunning for you in 360°!

A relatively peaceful moment for spiky as he plans his route...



We're expecting hilarious jostle-and-shove bundles for the finish line.

BUMPER BONUS!

Before Sonic, Sega's mascot was Alex Kidd. Alex who, Exactly?

Get some serious air, dodge the spikes and beat your opponent. Simple.

"Hey spiky, last one on the travellator wins a copy of *Sonic R!*"

GM VERDICT

GM LOVES
+ Kicking rivals into touch – literally!
+ Insane high-speed stunts

GM HATES
- Some crusty visuals.
- Will the race gimmick work?

MOST WANTED METER 4

Mixing platformer with racer is wicked, but chuck in the Sonic and we're sold - hook, line and sinker.

CAN'T WAIT?
MOST LIKE: .....Sonic Rush, 85%
BIGGEST RIVAL: .Loco Roco,92%
OUT SOONER: .....Ape Academy 2

2001

Hard to believe now, but Shadow was popular *once*.

SONIC ADVENTURE 2
Dreamcast, Cube

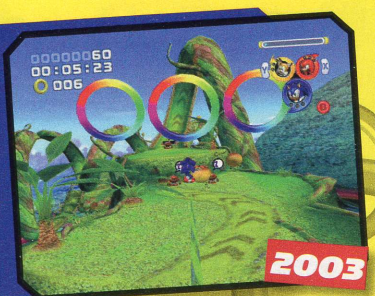
2003

Cracking pinball game, even *with* Tails' smug mug.

SONIC PINBALL PARTY GBA

SONIC HEROES
PS2, Xbox, Cube, PC

Another poor attempt to recreate the glory days of Sonic's 2D adventures in fancy 3D. Fancy controlling the trio of Sonic, Tails and Knuckles as you charge across nondescript landscapes pulling off pixel-perfect jumps in-between loop-the-loops? Neither did we. Average at best.



2003

2005

Big Blue finally came good – on Nintendo!

SONIC RUSH
DS

Anniversary 2006

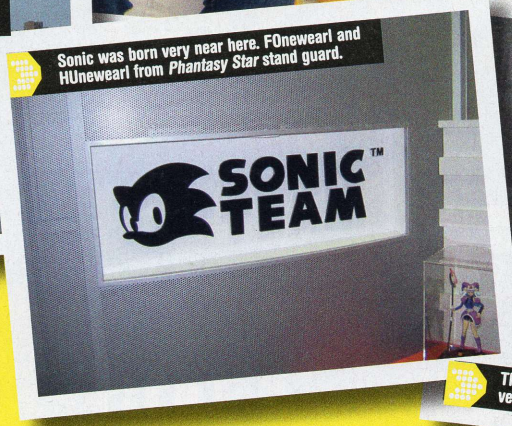
15th SONIC THE HEDGEHOG

Gaming legends... It must be a real honor for Sonic and Tails to meet one!

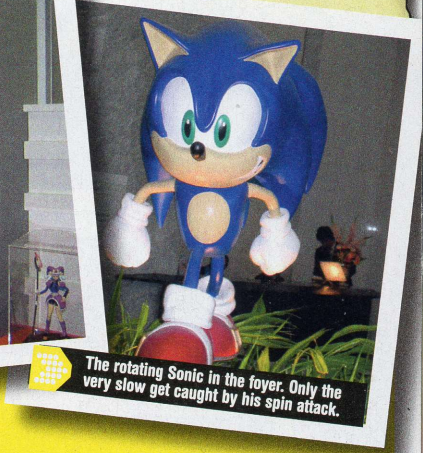
Your Exclusive Tour of Sega Japan

Join us, dear readers, for a swan around Sega Japan, one of the world's most respected software publishers, located in downtown Tokyo. Remember, no "accidental borrowing" of any *Shenmue 3* code you might find. There will be a full body search on the way out...

That's the original Sega office as seen from the main HQ.



Sonic was born very near here. FOnewearl and HUnewearl from *Phantasy Star* stand guard.



The rotating Sonic in the foyer. Only the very slow get caught by his spin attack.

Sonic's 15th Birthday!

He might be a couple of years older than the planet's mightiest games mag (er, that's us), but we pride ourselves on wearing better trainers. So it's no surprise that when Sonic wanted to get just the one gaming publication round his house for a 15th anniversary chat, we got the invite!

Once there, we sat down with Sonic Producer Akinori Nishiyama and let loose a barrage of hedgehog-related questions and queries...

GM How did the idea for Sonic come about? And why did you choose a hedgehog?

SEGA To differentiate from other games, we first came up with the concept of "high-speed action game". And to match this concept, we came up with the idea of a "body check" as an attack method because it meant not having to decrease our hero's speed. The body check had to hurt though, which gave us an idea about having "thorns on body". This is how we came up with the idea of a hedgehog!

GM Was there any pressure from your bosses to pick a less unusual animal?

SEGA I think they thought that the uniqueness of the hedgehog was very good!

GM How much was the design of Sonic influenced by Mario?

SEGA You could say that Sonic was not really influenced by Mario; however, we were conscious of the fact we wanted to differentiate our character from Mario.

GM How has Sonic's appearance changed through the years and why?

SEGA Sonic has changed from a very cartoony image with a big stomach, to a more stylish and sleek image. Sonic is often described as "cool", but since the image of "cool" has changed across the years, Sonic has also been changing little by little to fit in with the different times.

GM Did you think Sonic would reach his 15th birthday when you first created him?

SEGA We don't often create games thinking about 10 years or 20 years later, but of course we always wish that the title will continue to popular and become a series. I think Sonic's 15 years is this wish come true!

GM What has been one of Sonic's biggest achievements to date in terms of the games or the marketing? What made you most proud?

SEGA It would have to be the time when Sega Genesis sales soared in the US upon the arrival of a certain blue hedgehog!

GM Now Sonic's hit the 15-year barrier, what's his next goal?

SEGA To have a goal is important, but as I have said, it is the accumulation of small goals which is also important. If we continue to create good games, we should be able to keep celebrating his anniversaries for a long time! What we need to do is to try to create games that more and more people can enjoy.

GM Will Sonic go back to his retro roots and appear in a next-gen 2D-based game?

SEGA Sonic may appear in 2D if we manage to come up with something more innovative. Although there are many requests from our customers, personally I think there is no use in doing so if it is purely for nostalgic reasons.

GM When the first *Sonic* game was released, was there anything you wanted to include but couldn't due to restrictions of the console at the time?

SEGA The performances of the old consoles lacked power, but this made us create products with the motivation of wanting to go beyond the restrictions. One example of this would be to express pseudo 3D on 2D consoles. Back then, we struggled to somehow achieve this, but now the recent consoles having such high performance, I sometimes miss that strong ambition...

GM Did you have any ideas for a *Sonic* game that never got made?

SEGA Of course there are many, but I'm sorry I cannot tell you in any detail!

GM How do you feel the absence of Yuji Naka will effect Sonic?

SEGA It is sure that we will not be working with the one of the main pillars of the team, but we continue to create products using his ideas.

GM Is there ever the possibility of Amy getting her way and marrying Sonic in the future?

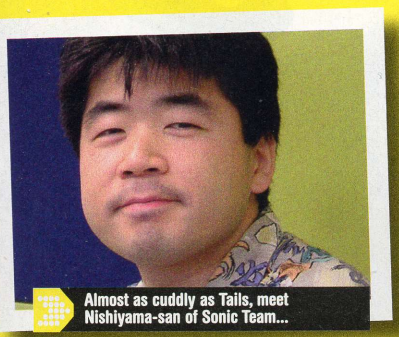
SEGA Sonic is free like the wind, so I have a feeling that he may not stay in one place. He is fickle and unpredictable!

GM Who'd win in a race out of Sonic and all the other characters?

SEGA Try it and find out in "Sonic Riders" which is now available in stores!

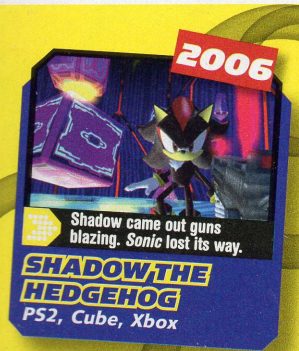
GM Cheeky! Now Sega solely develop and publish software, is there a chance of seeing Sonic teaming up with videogame rival, Mario? The Sega mascot has already appeared on a number of Nintendo consoles before now...

SEGA No one can say that it will never happen... I believe that future holds infinite possibilities!



Almost as cuddly as Tails, meet Nishiyama-san of Sonic Team...

Quiz Zone Answers!
1. He's an echidna! (That's an anteater to you and me.)
2. Bunny-boiling Robotnik had kidnapped her mother.
3. That'd be the big, scary monster known as Chaos.
4. Rogue, Shadow and Omega.
5. Fortune Telling. (She predicted Sonic would be at Never Lake.)
6. A bird! Flicky also enjoyed his own spin-off game, called *Flicky*.
7 Labyrinth Zone – first time as per normal and then as part of the Scrap Brain zone.
8 Mecha Sonic. *Not* Metallix!
9 The Master Chaos Emerald.
10 Rexxon. (He also crops up in *Sonic 2*'s Hill Top Zone)



SONIC
THE HEDGEHOG™

GAMES MASTER

WE ♥ GAMES

EMAIL US: gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk, subject heading GMail.
WRITE TO US: GMail, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.
TEXT US: Send GMAIL then your message to 84070. But keep it short!

Mad? Bad? Sad? See how each letter writer's feeling at a glance!

Happy | Mad | Unhappy | Angry | Surprised | Normal

Welcome to the bit of GM that's stuffed with your mail, game ideas, unreasonable demands – anything that shows how much we♥games. With a capital ♥!

WIN! STAR LETTER!

The Movies

Dear Team GM,

I've just finished watching the *Doom* movie, and thought it was a great adaptation of the game. The FPS section was very good and really gave you a very *Doom* feel.

The film got me thinking... over the last decade computer games have evolved from meagre forms of entertainment to full-blown immersive experiences. Games like *Splinter Cell, Halo* and *Metal Gear Solid* all tell amazing stories, while Sam Fisher, Master Chief or Solid Snake would all make great characters on the big screen. Some of Tom Clancy's books have already been made into films (*Sum of All Fears, Patriot games* etc) so why not make some of his games into films (*Rainbow 6, Splinter Cell, Ghost Recon*)?

There are so many classic games that could be made into films so I am sure over the next few years we will see many more. I for one can't wait!

Sam Austin, email

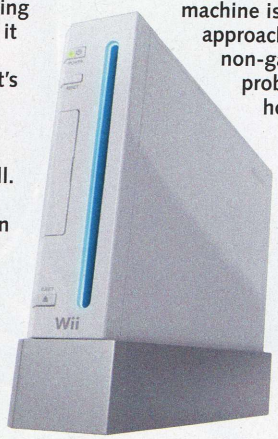
We've still yet to see a critically-acclaimed game-influenced movie. Saying that, a *Splinter Cell* film adaptation might *just* work. Surely George Clooney (or *GM*'s ex-publisher Matt Pierce) would be perfect in the lead role? And remember, everyone, the Star Letter each month wins a shiny new game! Coo!

Wii In The Corner

Dear GM,

I thought I'd write a quick email to defend Nintendo's decision on calling the Revolution the Nintendo 'Wii', before you are greeted with hordes of messages stating what a rubbish decision it was.

I personally believe it's a superb name. It's refreshing, original and looks very futuristic. It's very un-Nintendo as well. Don't get me wrong – I am a HUGE Nintendo fan but personally I believe our beloved Ninty may have gradually faded if no serious action was taken to reinvent their image (especially in Europe) and they have certainly done that!



If more gamers out there were a little more mature and stopped suggesting it's like going to the toilet and actually thought about it as 'we' as in 'we will change the way you play games forever', it makes a lot of sense. I also couldn't believe that some gamers have gone as far as saying they will now not purchase the console because of its name! I suggest that you lot re-think, as you will miss out on one of the most innovative consoles in years!

There's no doubt that I'll be first in the line at my local GAME to pick up my brand spanking new Wii when it's released later this year. Because Wii will rock you! See what I did there?

Owen Turner, Essex

Wii're Not Convinced...

Dear GM,

What on Earth are Nintendo thinking calling their next generation console "Wii"? It's an awful name that is wide open to ridicule. You can just imagine young children pulling on their mother's arm wailing "I wanna Wii!" in the middle of a crowded shopping centre.

Nintendo have stated that the name represents the ideology behind their 'revolution': 'Wii' sounds like 'we', and the two 'i's look like two friends sat together. I do agree with Nintendo that the machine is probably the most approachable for gamers and non-gamers alike, and it will probably provide countless hours of enjoyment. It is just a shame that it has been given such a silly name. I mean, what was wrong with Revolution, eh? Nothing.

There has been much speculation about what types of games we will be seeing on the new console, with talk about sword fighting, fishing, tennis etc. It now seems likely that the most appropriate launch title would involve post-pub bladder control...

Nintendo, I suggest that you change the name of your new console or else 'urine' trouble...

Martin, Manchester

Born Wii

Dear GM,

What's in a name? Quite a lot apparently, judging by the fuss everyone is making about Nintendo's decision to drop the cool Revolution name and replace it with the silly Wii. But lets face it, a crap name isn't going to make or break a company with Nintendo's reputation – it's the console and its games that matter.

Sony and Microsoft are hardly setting the gold standard with their console naming policy; how much thought went into sticking a three or 360 on the end of the old name?

Nintendo are crazy, we've always known that – but crazy in a good way, so if the *GM* reviews of the next-gen Wii games make it clear that the standard of the *Zeldas, Marios* et al are as good as ever I won't let the name put me off – I will definitely be having a Wii!

Andy Dingwall, Derby

Three excellent letters, each bristling with valid points. Cheers, fellas. Personally, we thought the whole think was a mickey-take at first, then fell into a state of despair when we realised it

GOT A FANSITE!

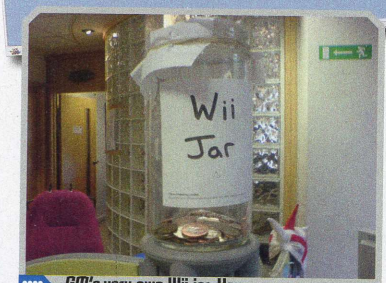
Any game-related websites you've either made or couldn't live without? Email, write or text and tell us! Potential free goodies await the best entry...

FANSITE OF THE MONTH

www.residentevilfan.com

An indispensable website for, well, *Resident Evil* fans. It contains the stories, walkthroughs, pictures and videos from every *Resident Evil* game. it also has wallpapers and plenty of media from the games, including very funny spoof videos made by fans. It even has a *Resident Evil* encyclopaedia!

Ian Orwin, email



GM's very own Wii-jar. You make a Wii joke, you pay.

Gmail Filter

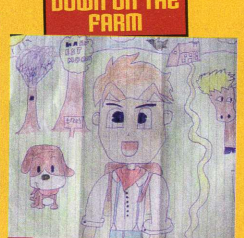
Picking out the special kids from the *GM* mail bag and putting them on their own bus

PHILOSOPHER OF THE MONTH: ..... "Being a gamer is just like being a teacher", says the wise Stephen King.
MOST AUDACIOUS CLAIM: .... "I've seen *Bully* for sale in a US games shop!" Quit with the fibbing Luke Harris.
SHOCKER: ..... "Can I get Sims pregnant?" We don't know, can you Danni Webber?
MOST DISTANT COMPLAINT: ....Saudi Arabia (5093km). Sorry, competitions aren't open to overseas readers! :(

CARTOON GUEST STAR!

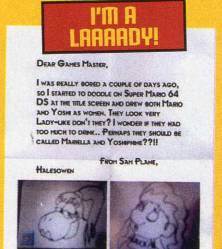
The Simpsons' Snake by Dan Malin.

DOWN ON THE FARM



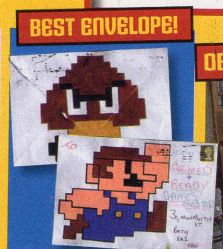
Harvest Moon cockle-warming by Aaron Mackie.

I'M A LARRRDY!



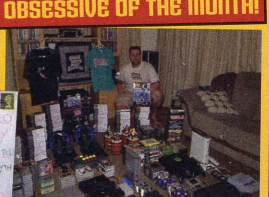
Transvestite Mario and Yoshi by Sam Plane.

BEST ENVELOPE!



Melvin Magaby really wants a DS!

OBSESSIVE OF THE MONTH!



David Venter is a proper hardcore gamer. Just look!

WE REALLY LOVE GAMES

YOU THOUGHT YOU LOVED GAMES?

CHATTING WITH THE PEOPLE WHO'VE TAKEN IT ALL TOO FAR.

This month: Dan Albritton and his Nintendo-themed amusement park idea. Check out www.nintendoamusementpark.com.

GM: So, what's the idea behind it?
Dan: Me, Noah Shibley and Quanya Chen want to make a theme park based on elements of platformer video games.

GM: Madness!
Dan: We're convinced that user-controlled interactive ideas will become the norm. And it's ridiculous stupid crazy fun!

GM: What activities does it involve?
Dan: it's all about 'exploring the jump space', like jumping to hit ? boxes. We're seeing between 10 and 14 feet hits!

GM: Any reactions so far?
Dan: Well, everyone who tries it has a blast, but they all complain of getting tired quickly. That's the thing about bungees, it's so fun you forget that you are actually putting in all the energy.

GM: Any secrets you can share?
Dan: it's all as transparent as it looks. Mostly we are trying to advance this idea as the future of physical entertainment. Physically Augmented Reality is the future!

GM: Marvellous! Thanks very much.

THIS COULD BE YOU!

Spent long evenings turning your love of games into something 3D? Send us the pics and you could be featured in the pages of GM! You Thought You Loved Games?, Gamesmaster, Future Publishing Ltd, 30 Monmouth St, Bath,

Use the bungee apparatus to jump!

It looks like brilliant fun! Let's hope Dan's ideas get picked up for real.

GAMES MASTER GOES ONLINE!

www.myspace.com/gamesmastermag

Want to make friends with GM? Then check out our MySpace page online!

was all real. But, as the weeks passed, it hardly seems to matter any more. From what we've played of Wii so far, it truly is shaping up to be something special. One thing: we got *so* sick of the 'streaming' media jokes that we actually set up our own Wii jar to punish punsters!

To summarise, so long as Ninty comes up with the good in terms of games (and from what we've played at E3, they have and then some!), who's *really* going to care about a name? And what side on the whole Wii debate do the rest of you readers stand on?

Butting In

Dear GM,

Here is a very funny game my friends and I play to amuse ourselves on *San Andreas*. It's called the 'Flying Headbutt'!

1) Drive down to Los Santos and position yourself in front of Jim's Sticky Ring (the donut shop).
2) Highlight this point on your map using the ◎ button.
3) Use a cheat to spawn a fighter jet.
4) Fly North (just past Red County), getting as much altitude as you can.
5) Loop round and head back towards the Donut Shop (keep maintaining that height!)
6) When near enough, leap out of the plane and guide CJ towards the donut shop (but *don't* open your parachute), holding up on your analogue to execute what we have affectionately termed the 'flying headbutt'.

The object of the game is simple: Who can get CJ through the Donut sign on top of the shop or execute a flying headbutt onto a moving vehicle? Hours of fun!

Martin Gardom, email

Mental! Good work, Martin...

Bargain!

Dear GM,

I just snagged *Outrun 2* for Xbox from Currys for 47p (!), plus after a bit of charm the kindly shop assistant gave me an old Xbox demo pod disc containing full versions of *Sega GT 2002* and *Jet Set Radio Future*. That's three top-rated Xbox games for a measly 47p! Beat that!

Matt Wyatt, email

Result Matt – that's a whole lotta

LIST OF DEMANDS

How to make *Black* bigger and better!

BLACK 2

- Even More Guns!
- Online 32-player multi-player.
- Gun Emplacements.
- Upgrade/shop system (secondary objectives earn points to pay).
- Dual wielding.
- An unlockable "explosive bullets" mode.
- Map maker, lots and lots of petrol-fuelled cars!
- Four-player split screen and two-player co-op.
- The ability to carry at least three guns.
- More destructive environments.
- Create-a-weapon mode.
- Use camera peripheral to input yourself/mates as heroes/enemies.
- A jump button!
- Distract enemies by lobbing rocks.
- Bosses!
- Intelligent teammates who respond to specific orders.
- EA and Criterion extras, like a *Burnout* car launcher and *Battlefield* mock-up level.
- Unlockable mini nuclear weapons (e.g. Davy Crockett from *MGS3*-style thing)
- Cars, Tanks and on-rails shooting section.
- More plot info!
- A level set in a fireworks factory.

A *Black 2* blowout spliced together from input by Jordan Scott and "annoying idiot" Sam Mottershaw (his words, not ours), Chester.

QUOTE FOR THE BOX:
"PREPARE TO GO ON THE RIDE OF YOUR LIFE..."

MY GAME IDEA

INNOCENCE

COPYRIGHT: LIAM SMITH, MANCHESTER

WHAT IS IT: A boy aged 13 (who looks eerily like *GM* regular Steve Bailey) gazes in awe at a pro skateboarder. Dazzled by their skills, he takes it up as a hobby and discovers a latent natural talent. Cue loads of skateboarding, inline skating, BMXing, snowboarding and (pah) skiing. Our hero gradually grows up, until at the end of the game he's the best, richest and most well-liked person in the world.

HOW IT PLAYS: A mix of *SSX*, *NFS* and *Tony Hawk's*. Get sponsorship, buy a ride and actually 'drive' to events (or just go crusin'). Oh, yeah, and get pursued by cops (because everyone loves a good cop chase). Skate in Wales (full of sheep lovin' Welsh people), Edinburgh (och nooo ya cannae do that!) and Newcastle (grind the angel of the North. CHAMPION).

POTENTIAL BEST BIT: We're not quite sure how the 'screenshot' above will be incorporated, but using a 'board to hack a pedestrians head off seems like an amusing diversion...

JUDGEMENT

We love the idea of grinding famous landmarks – *Innocence* could well and truly grind *THUG* into the dirt.

MAKE YOUR LIST OF DEMANDS!

Reckon you could juice up your fave game series? Either do a BSc in Computer Programming or get your ideas out into the world by sending your List of demands to our Monmouth Street addy or gamesmaster@futurenet.co.uk! Free office goodies for the best ones...

HI-SCORE CAM

Readers! Have you done so exceptionally well at a game that you think the world will be dazzled at your madskillz? Then this is the place to do it! We'd love to see how you're doing on games like *New Super Mario Bros.*, *Metroid Prime Pinball*, *GTA: Liberty City Stories* PS2, and, ooh, whatever else you're playing! So what are you waiting for? Send your pics of your scores to the usual address!

What are your high scores on *New Super Mario Bros.*? We want to know RIGHT NOW!

WE LOVE GAMES

The bit of GM that's stuffed to bursting point with your mail

Sega lovin' for under 50p! Better than a Mars bar any day...

Game Gloom

Dear GM,

I'm writing on a sad note about the gaming world's proudest moment - E3. While I was enjoying Sony's press conference news filtered in that my country was on the brink of civil war.

As I may never get the chance to read *GM* in the years to come I would like to remind everyone of the reasons why we play games. Firstly we play to take our mind off things, we play to meet new friends, build friendships and we play for the spirit of competition. Hope to read you again soon.

☹ **Akash Ratnayaka, Sri Lanka**

It looks as if a ceasefire is in effect as we go to press, so that's some good news. Nevertheless, all of Team *GM* have our fingers crossed that things work out in Sri Lanka. Good luck Akash.

GTA Online?

Dear GM,

You know how every *GTA* fan moans about Rockstar making the game online? Well, my friend opened my eyes to the wonder that is *MTA* (*Multi Theft Auto*). *MTA* is *GTA* ONLINE!

It's a program that lets you join online races, host online races, and create your own map! There are races and deathmatches in vehicles. Soon there will be a proper deathmatch mode on foot with weapons...

All you need to get on *MTA* is *San Andreas* on your PC, the *MTA* program, and an internet connection. Download *MTA* from www.mtasa.com – it's the best invention since electricity and I guarantee any *GTA* fan will love it!

☺ **Ben Townsend, Accrington**

What a find, Ben! Cheers for the heads up on this. *GTA* fans, grab yourselves a ride and screech on over to www.mtasa.com at the double...

Retro Rage

Dear GM,

Gr8 mag by the way. About two weeks ago me and my mate were bored and decided to play some Sega retro games. We booted up our old Mega Drive and started playing *Streets of Rage*. And that got me thinking! This game would be a brilliant remake on the PS3 and the Xbox 360. Think about it... realistic next-gen graphics, a tweaked storyline and maybe some new characters. So what do you think?

☺ **Euan McHale, email**

Sounds like a whole new game to us, Euan! Surely the game's charms lay in the quirky OTT art style, outrageous special moves and classic trio of Axel, Blaze and Adam? Still, classic hack 'n slash *Golden Axe* is next up for a next-gen makeover, so keep an eye on how that turns out...

Mayan Musings

Dear GM,

I recently had an art exam, and I chose to focus on the obscure topic of Mayan culture. But, since my school's library was no help at all, I really was at a terrible loss of where to turn...

Little did I know that my salvation lay at hand during a quick go on *Tomb Raider: Legend*! I also discovered handy piccies from *Crash Bandicoot*, which I used in my work.

I can't show you what I've done at the moment because it's being marked, but I think my experience just shows that some games can help with your education and aren't just for entertainment. And I flipping well hope I get a good mark.

☺ **Simon Ward, email**

Good luck Si, let us know how it all turns out!

Cube Comeback

Dear GM,

One day I walked into my local GAME, and I looked for the GameCube section. It wasn't there. The shop assistant said that they'd taken down the GameCube section. I made a stand. I walked in a few days later, with a letter of complaint to the manager. Since then I have been into that shop every weekend, to see if they had put the section back up. And one day, success! it was back up in its large, former glory.

☺ **David Hutchison**

We applaud your valiant efforts!

Do you want more old games updated, or fresh new ones?

LOVE GAMES?

SO DO WE!

Getting all hot under the collar about a games-related debate? Caught a bizarre gaming moment on camera? Bagged a monstrous high score? Written, starred or directed in your own game-related film? (Really?) Then tell us! Send all your comments, piccies and movies to the usual addresses – the most deserving specimens might even win something!

THINGS TO MAKE AND DO!

THIS MONTH'S TASK...

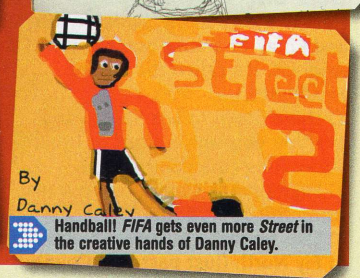
Lots more cracking Artpad (artpad.art.com) efforts this month – nice one, and keep them coming! Even though the PS3 controller design has now been unveiled we're frankly a bit unimpressed, so we still want to know how *you'd* have done it. Any more DS doodles would also be welcome, or if you simply fancy whacking up a painted/pencilled/biro'd masterpiece to show off your awesome artistic talents then feel free to send it over to us!

We think Apple might have something to say, Tom Ireland!

A grizzled Solid Snake blends into the jungle thanks to Evan Cazaly.

Resi 4's Leatherface strikes back thanks to Darren Murphy.

Why is Peach so shocked? Answes on a postcard, Darren Useree.



Handball! *FIFA* gets even more *Street* in the creative hands of Danny Caley.

Pestering the jammiest jobsmiths in the biz

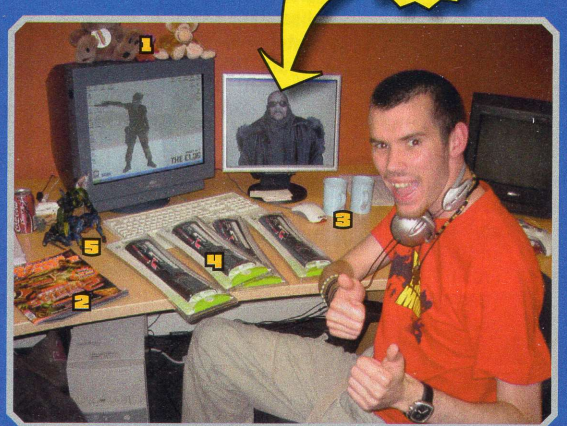
WE WANT YOUR JOB!

Ben Ward! Do you actually play games for a living? "Whenever I get five minutes! However, my job is to handle the Bizarre web site at www.bizarreonline.net, and keep our community up to date." Typical day? "Either coding new and exciting web stuff, or writing articles. Oh, and I try to spend as much of my time as I can looking over the shoulders of people as they work on freakin' awesome stuff!" Proudest moment? "I was a massive *PGR* and *Geometry Wars* geek before working at Bizarre, so meeting the guys and gals behind these games was awesome in itself." How much fun is your job? "It's very cool. In fact, I'm trying to get everything finished off today as we're all playing a company paintball match tomorrow!" Any tips? "Find what you want to do, and make a good demo. Make a game!" Ace! End!

HOW JAMMY IS THAT?

He works for the peeps that make *Project Gotham Racing!*

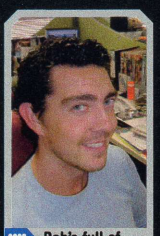
TOOLS OF THE TRADE



1 Cuddly toys – "Giving moral support when I just can't fix that last little bug. There's a bunny rabbit from *Wiz 'n' Liz*, and two monkeys of varying sizes."
2 Copy of *GamesMaster* – "This is essential reading material."
3 Empty mugs of tea – "This is the fuel of the UK games industry."
4 Lots of *PGR3* face plates – "I'm hoarding them until they become antiques, then I'll sell them all on eBay to fund a trip to Las Vegas."
5 Two intimate Master Chiefs – "These two characters usually spend their days guarding our Biznet server in a variety of, er, intimate poses. They've been specially moved from their post for this photo, but they're going back now. The safety of the server is at stake!"

We ♥ Old Games

Sonic may be famous, but spare a thought for four rival animal icons...



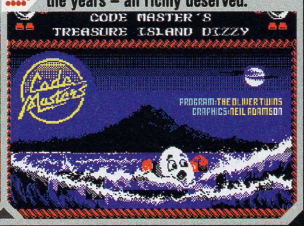
Rob's full of retro goodness! It's why he's so orange, you see.

Dizzy

DIZZY (1987, C64)

A walking, somersaulting, puzzle-solving ovum (not technically an animal then, but who knows what Dizzy might have hatched into?). Yep, eggy-breath Dizzy (Prince of the Yolkfolk, no less) starred in an impressive 16 titles between 1986 and 1993. Most famous for consistently dominating the all-formats charts in a way that Ocean and EA could only ever fantasise about, as well as causing an entire generation of gamers to reduce many a joystick to their component atoms, this hard-boiled hero still enjoys a something of a cult following on the net.

Dizzy and Daisy's eggy romance lasted for decades...

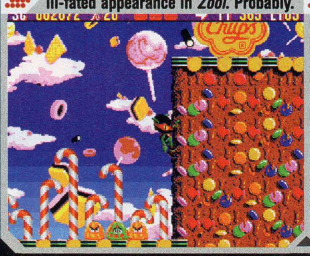


Dizzy died a thousand deaths over the years – all richly deserved.

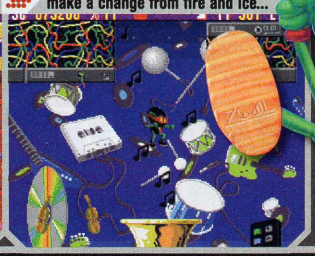
Zool

ZOOL (1993, MEGA DRIVE)

After *Sonic* wowed Mega Drive gamers, the buzzword for success instantly equalled speed – the faster, the better. Everything that *didn't* move at a million miles an hour was considered as dated as Mario's dungarees. Enter Gremlin's Zool, ninja of the nth dimension. Although only really a rubbish green alien ant, he nevertheless enjoyed some serious popularity in the early nineties.



Chupa Chups sales bombed after an ill-fated appearance in *Zool*. Probably.

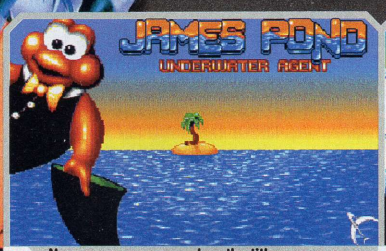


At least CD World and Sweet World make a change from fire and ice...

James Pond

JAMES POND (1990, AMIGA)

"The name's Pond...James Pond". Quite. The fish with a license to gill made quite a splash in the early 90s. Levels mimicked Bond movies, with titles like "A View to a Spill" and – get this – "*Leak* and Let Die". *Groan.* The sequels continued in the same vein, with *James Pond 2: Codename: RoboCod* (featuring, yes, a bionic fish) and *James Pond 3: Operation Starfish*. Madness!



No expense was spared on the title screen, as you can plainly see here.

Pond's Pythonesque romps were very British, even down to Penguin bars!

Sparkster

SPARKSTER (1994, SNES)

SNES and Mega Drive-era hero that, though seemingly destined for great things, never quite achieved his full potential. Conceived by Konami's Nobuya Nakazato (genius behind the Mega Drive and SNES Contras), his three outings all received rave reviews. He looked pretty cool as well – or as cool as an opossum in suit of armour *could* look, anyway. Armed with a sword that could blast energy and a rocket pack that allowed him to fly, Sparkster strove to destroy the Pig Star (a porcine equivalent of the Death Star, naturally).

Gripping boss fights involved furry mammals in mech suits.

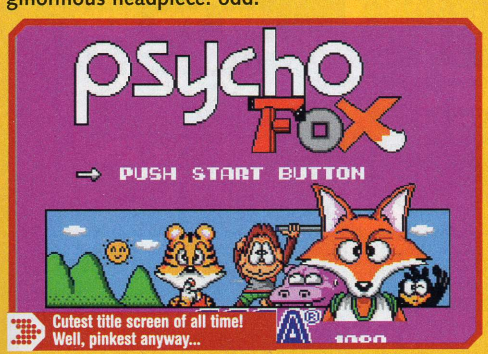
Sparkster almost had it all – might he yet make a comback?

RETRO KNOWLEDGE: Dizzy was not intended to be an egg – the shape was chosen because it was easy to animate!

Where are they now?

Psycho Fox

Superb Sega Master System platformer featuring a fox in shorts with the impressive ability to morph into a pig, monkey or tiger. He was mysteriously replaced as the hero in Mega Drive sequel *Magical Flying Hat Turbo Adventure* by some generic Manga-style chappie with a ginormous headpiece. odd.



Cutest title screen of all time! Well, pinkest anyway...

This Month in GM 1993

Beat-'em-ups were the order of the month back in August '93, as *GM* rounded up four of the heaviest hitters of the time – *Final Fight CD* on Mega CD, *World Heroes 2* on Neo Geo, *Mortal Kombat* on SNES and Mega Drive and *Final Fight 2* on SNES – for the ultimate showdown. The winner? Not what you might expect, as reviewer Andy Lowe (plainly seduced by the horsepower of the Neo Geo) awarded the *King of Fighters* placard to *World Heroes 2* with 93%. OK, so we didn't *always* get our scores right...

Free Play

Gunroar

Why you must play it: *Gunroar* sees you controlling a little boat with the cursors, and a targeting reticule with a mouse, for complete freedom of movement and firing. It's got a gentle difficulty curve, a great soundtrack and looks like an accident in a fireworks factory...

How to get it: Surf over to http://www.asahi-net.or.jp/~cs8k-cyu/windows/gr_e.html

We imagine this is what the world looks like to Jeff Minter...

REVIEWS

GAMES MASTER

✔EVERY GAME ✔EVERY FORMAT ✔EVERY MONTH

REVIEWS ED

It's like California outside our office window (admittedly with less beach and more obesity) and we finally admit defeat. It's really not the weather for sitting inside and playing games. But that's why handhelds were invented, and this month Sony's *Loco Roco* rocked us – the happiest game ever made – while Nintendo aren't letting their side down with *New Super Mario Bros.* Of course, if you're really not worried about becoming vitamin D deficient, there's plenty more for you to sit inside and play. Read on and see!

KATH BRICE

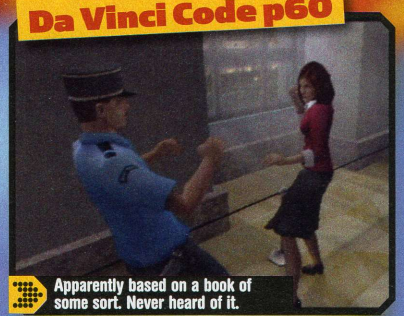
Mario goes back to his roots in one of the best platformers ever!

GREVIEWS M GUARANTEE

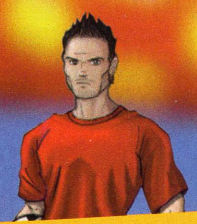
Only *GamesMaster* has reviews you can trust. This is why...

- We play and judge games on every format. We're not biased to any particular machine. We're just biased towards good games.
- We only review finished code.
- We only use expert, experienced game players who know what they're talking about.
- We're 100% independent and honest. If a game's bad, we'll say so.
- We show and tell you more about a game than any other mag or web site. No one else crams as much in.
- Games are expensive. We want to make sure you never buy a bad one.

Da Vinci Code p60

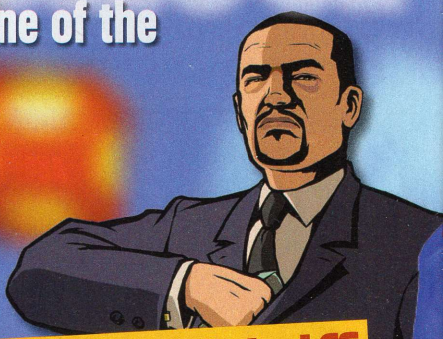


Apparently based on a book of some sort. Never heard of it.



WT Soccer p61

Handheld soccer that's full of crazy minigames.



Grand Theft Auto: LCS p62

The PSP classic comes to PS2 in style. Yipper!

HOW GM'S REVIEWS WORK

Here's a guided tour around the only reviews you should trust.

Other formats

What's it like on your machine?

XBOX	Link To The Past/Four Swords, The original Zelda co-op, in handheld form.	85%
The closest alternatives on xo		
CUBE	Baldur's Gate: Dark Alliance 2	88%
PC	Final Fantasy XI	90%

Game not reviewed on your console? Check out this box to see how the other versions are coming on, or for the most similar game you can play on your machine right now.

It's crunch time. Here's where you'll find the real deal for every game. Each title is rigorously assessed in three disciplines:

GRAPHICS: What does it look like? Does it move smoothly? Enough variety?

GAMEPLAY: Does the game work? Is it satisfying and fun to play, or a pain in the arse?

LIFESPAN: Is there enough of it? Will you be playing this title for months or mere minutes?

The best and worst things about the game dragged out and held at bullet point!

The final verdict in one snappy soundbite, with the only score that counts at its side. Remember: it's not an average!

JUDGEMENT JES

GM LOVES
+ The best co-operative game on the 'Cube and a perfect argument for connectivity
+ Brilliant puzzles that aren't too difficult
+ A cracking adventure for the single player

GM HATES
- It's a very expensive game to play properly - you'll need four GBAs and link cables for four players
- It looks like a GBA game a lot of the time

GRAPHICS 90%
Cute GBA-type sprites mixed with marvellous special effects.

GAMEPLAY 90%
Amazing co-operative gameplay and some ingenious puzzles.

LIFESPAN 90%
As a multi-player it could last for months, but not so long on your own.

OVERALL
89%
Play with three mates with GBA's, and you've got one of the best games on the 'Cube.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..Final Fantasy Origins, 83%
WORSE THAN:.....Legend of Zelda: The Wind Waker, 97%
WAIT FOR:.....The new 'adult' Zelda
BEST PRICE:.....£29.99, amazon.co.uk

REVIEWS • OUT: NOW • FORMAT: GC • PRICE: £39.99 • DEVELOPER: NINTENDO • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO • SPECIAL: GBA, LINK CABLE • OTHER FORMATS: GBA • CALL: 01932 895390 • PLAYERS: 1-4

Find out if the game's on your machine. We'll show every format it's set for, with the arrow showing you which version we've reviewed.

Your 'at a glance' guide to the game and its main features. First-person or third-person? How many levels? Bosses? You'll find it here.

Your instant look at some in-game action so you know how it plays. If it's a slower strategy game we'll show you how it all works.

Still undecided after reading the review? This box tells you about anything better or worth waiting for, and the cheapest place to buy it.

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

GM's badge of gaming greatness is only given to classic games. If a game gets one of these it's an essential purchase.

THE SCORE

90 TO 100%
Tippety top cream of the crop. If you own the console, buy this!

80 TO 89%
A great game. If you like the sound of it, you should get it in.

70 TO 79%
Neat enough but a little lacking. Still, if you really must have it...

60 TO 69%
A game scuppered by an annoying flaw or two. Shame.

50 TO 59%
Above average but only just. Spend your cash elsewhere.

40 TO 49%
Quite simply not very good. We played it - we didn't like it.

30 TO 39%
Oh dear. Perhaps the programmers should play some 'games'.

20 TO 29%
What the...?! This looks awful and plays awful as well.

10 TO 19%
Not a videogame at all but a device of mental torture.

0 TO 9%
Like dangling your diddlies in a mincing machine.

HYUNDAI
HYUNDAI IMAGEQUEST
HERE ON GAMESMASTER WE PLAY ALL OUR GAMES USING HYUNDAI IMAGEQUEST TVS AND MONITORS. FOR MORE INFO GO TO WWW.HYUNDAIQ.COM.

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Talkman p65
Fancy speaking Japanese? Let this translator help you!

Loco Roco p68
The cutest game ever made? You can bet your life it is!

Metroid Pinball p65
Samus has herself – wait for it – a ball! Groan.

Rise and Fall p75
Get Cleopatra to beat up entire armies! Almost.

Half-Life 2: Ep. One p76
Wouldn't it have been easier to call it *Half-Life 3?*

MGS Acid 2 p64
Snake's back in the palm of your hand in funky cel-shaded style. Snaaaaaaake! And so on.

Forbidden Siren 2 p74
It's very nearly the best survival horror game ever made...

Micro Machines V4 p79
The classic is back, but is it as good as it used to be?

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: DS • PRICE: £29.99
DEVELOPER: NINTENDO • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NONE
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEBSITE: WWW.NINTENDO.COM • PLAYERS: 1-2

DS

WHAT'S IT?

Surely you jest! It's a brand-new 2D *Mario* platformer! Hurrah!

- New moves and new power-ups
- Wireless multi-player and touch screen minigames

FIRST LEVEL

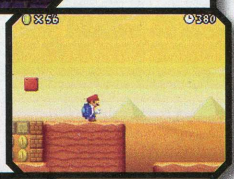
IN GAME CLIPS

In the very first level, Mario gets to grow huge and SMASH EVERYTHING!

POWER UP!

All the old power-up favourites return, including the Fire Flower, your greatest ally. Hurl fireballs and watch 'em go!

Mini Mario is a new addition – he's so light he can jump for miles and also run across water. Handy for secret passages, too...



The Blue Shell is also a new 'un. It lets Mazza curl up and knock enemies flying while he's running. Handy!

Mega Mario's great fun, and best used for getting extra lives. The more you smash, the more lives you get! Nice, that.

NEW SUPER MARIO BROS

A splendid wall-jump down memory lane!

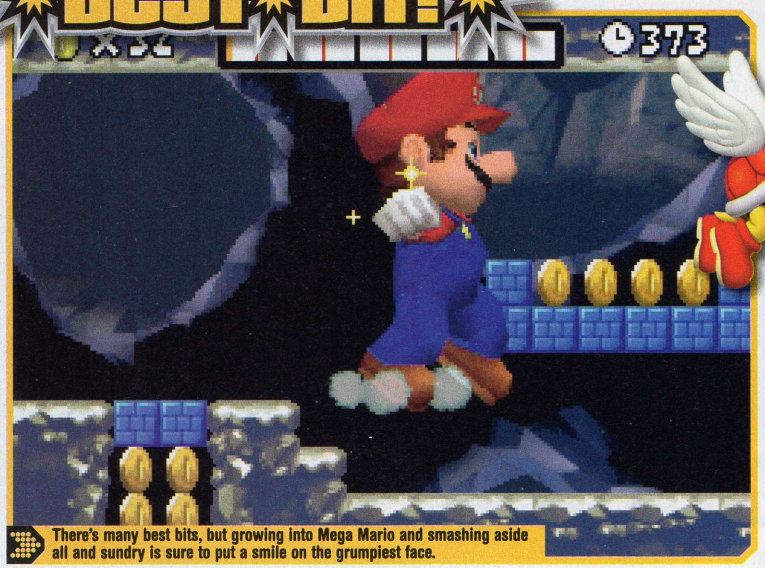
There are a *lot* of brilliant games on the DS, but you'd be hard pressed to find one that caresses your joy nodes quite so much as *New Super Mario Bros.* This return to the *Mario* games of old – all running, jumping, collecting coins and avoiding Boos – is a stellar revisiting of our hero's glory days, and a fabulous introduction to top-rank 2D platforming for those who've grown up with the plumber in three dimensions.

But we must introduce a note of caution while the trumpets blare and confetti is thrown. *Mario* veterans, while still revelling in the warm-hearted fun the game delivers in spades, will find this as comfortable and familiar as an old sock (although considerably more exciting). There's little here, aside from some new power-ups, new moves, touch screen-based minigames and a laugh-out-loud multi-player mode, that qualifies as genuinely new.

GOLDEN OLDIE

Think of *New Super Mario Bros.* instead as a fabulous continuation of those classic games of old. It's fairly simple to get

BEST BIT!

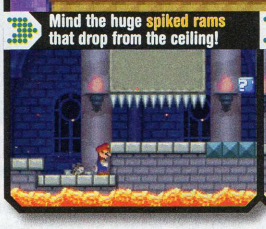


There's many best bits, but growing into Mega Mario and smashing aside all and sundry is sure to put a smile on the grumpiest face.

BAD BOY BOWSER

Half way through every world you'll get a special Bowser level to confront Bowser Jr, and then a proper boss level at the end of the world. Expect spikes and lava!

This levels is constantly rising and giant spiked balls make your life a misery.



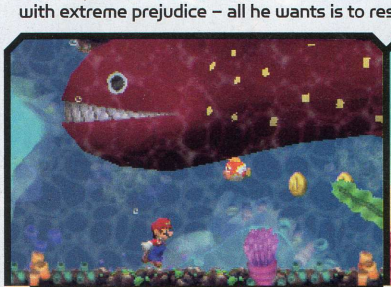
Mind the huge spiked rams that drop from the ceiling!

These ropes let you jump higher and further.

But make sure that you dodge the fireballs from the lava!

MONSTER MASH

New Super Mario Bros. is stuffed with enemies for Mario to jump on, shoot fireballs at and generally terminate with extreme prejudice (not that Mario really exterminates with extreme prejudice – all he wants is to resuce Peach so he can get some cake. Always thinking with his stomach, that man).



Look! A frickin' enormous eel! These fellas are generally best avoided...

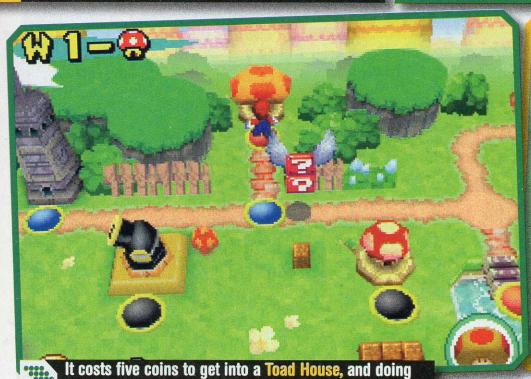
These things can be knocked down to size with a fireball or two. Or three.

These spider-things are deadly, but you can merrily jump across their backs to safety.

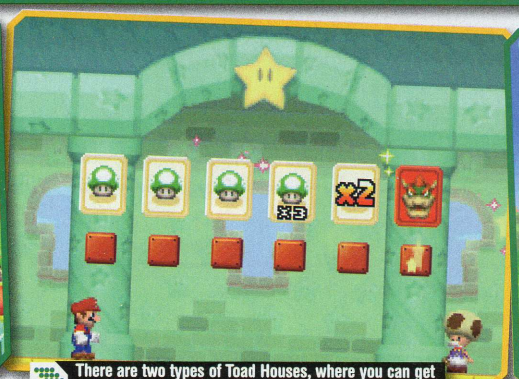
There are some oddly realistic-looking sharks in one of the underwater levels. Most strange.

FREEBIES!

There are three giant gold coins on each level. Finding them all will take perseverance and some remarkable 'madskillz' (cough), but it's worth ferreting them out...



It costs five coins to get into a Toad House, and doing so allows you to save your game. Helpful.



There are two types of Toad Houses, where you can get extra lives or a random power-up for use later on.

Some levels can also only be accessed by paying to get to them. An expensive business, to be sure!

Don't dally for long on these barrels, as they have a distressing tendency to sink.

through to the end, and the levels are both a graphical treat and beautifully-designed, meaning anyone can get into this without too much frustration.

But for the hardcore, there's a welcome stuffed dungaree's worth of secret levels that only the truly nimble of finger will get to see, offering an expanded lifespan and greater challenge. There are three giant gold coins on each level; collecting these allows you to 'spend' them to access new levels and Toad Houses that generously dish out extra lives and power-ups. There are also hidden routes to reach certain worlds, which require the use of certain power-ups and hunting for hidden passages; in fact, if you simply hurtle through the game without a care for the secret bits, you'll see less than half of it. It's worth searching every nook and cranny and taking the odd leap of faith, even if it means plunging Mario to his doom more often than not.

This isn't a gaming revolution, but it's nevertheless brilliant fun, and demonstrates wonderfully that you don't always have to re-invent the wheel if you want to create a magnificent game. Some might be a little disappointed at the familiarity of it all, but that aside, this is simply tremendous fun. If you own a DS, you owe it to yourself to throw £30 at your local game-vendor and take a trip to the Mushroom Kingdom pronto. Your life will be a little bit brighter for it. GM

If you can nobble Lakitu, you get to fly around in his cloud and hunt for coins.

Alternatives

Also try:

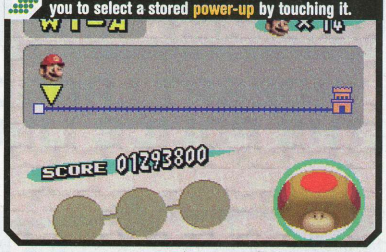
PSP *Daxter* is 3D, not 2D, but it's a rewarding little platformer that'll soothe your game-glands.

Or try these:

PS2 Jak and Daxter	87%
CUBE Super Mario Sunshine	95%

TOUCH ME!

The bottom screen shows info, and also allows you to select a stored power-up by touching it.



JUDGEMENT

JES

GM LOVES	GM HATES
+ Proper old-school *Mario* platforming!	- It's a bit old-fashioned and lacking in surprises
+ Good new moves and power-ups	- And, er, that's about it
+ Laughalicious multi-player mode	- Nope. There's nothing else!

GRAPHICS
Vibrant 2D-with-3D-bits that stroke your eyes to sleep.

GAMEPLAY
This is the absolute best in 2D platforming. It gets no better!

LIFESPAN
Ferret out the secrets and it'll last you ages. Plus multi-player!

OVERALL
90%
A modern classic, but one that is perhaps overly-familiar at times.

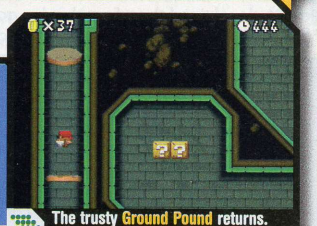
SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Sonic Rush, 85%
WORSE THAN: ..... Nothing!
WAIT FOR: ..... Yoshi's Island 2 (winter)
BEST PRICE: ... £24.98, www.amazon.co.uk

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

JUMP AROUND

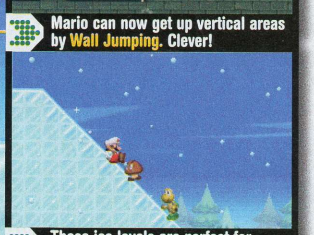
Mario's one of the most flexible characters ever, able to do almost anything. Possibly even tie a cherry stalk into a knot with his tongue. We'd best ask Peach about that one, eh?

Running, jumping and climbing – there's no stopping the little fella!



The trusty Ground Pound returns. Smash enemies with your butt!

Mario can now get up vertical areas by Wall Jumping. Clever!

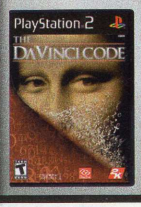

Those ice levels are perfect for sliding down. See the Koopas fly!

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99
DEVELOPER: THE COLLECTIVE • PUBLISHER: 2K GAMES • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NO
OTHER FORMATS: XBOX, PC • WEB: WWW.2KGAMES.COM/DAVINCICODE • PLAYERS: 1

PS2 XBOX PC

What is it?



A puzzle adventure based on the multi-million selling book.

- Play as Robert Langdon and Sophie Neveu
- Includes action and puzzles not in the book or the film

How it works

In game pic

Here's how mild mannered Robert Langdon deals with evil security guards – with his learned FISTS!

SUPER

Sophie Neveu is nothing like Audrey Tautou, but she does have a cracking *'Allo 'Allo* style French accent, which is jolly nice.

There are no likenesses from the film, so you get a rather nondescript Robert Langdon. He's hard as nails, though.

It's a long time before you have to deal with the albino monk. He mainly shows up in the extremely tedious cutscenes.

THE DA VINCI CODE™

This will test your faith in games!

It's a mark of just how successful *The Da Vinci Code* is that there's now a game of it. The reason? Well, when publishers are looking for intellectual property to swipe and turn interactive, stories about academics squabbling with vicars don't usually spring to the forefront.

But several million book sales and a Hollywood movie change things, so developers The Collective have been given the challenge of turning a run-of-the-mill thriller (that's mostly remarkable due to its revelations about Jesus's bedroom antics) into an all-singing, all-dancing videogame.

The key to The Collective's approach is that they've pitched it at fans of *The Da Vinci Code* rather than gamers, so instead of action there's puzzle after puzzle. Anagrams, deciphering, riddles, code cracking – you name it, it's all here and the majority of the time it makes for rewarding gameplay.

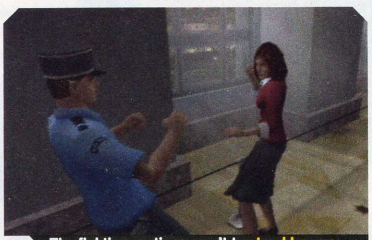
PUNCH-DRUNK PROF

The puzzles are on the whole logical, require some detective work, and often need a pen and paper to solve. The trouble is that sometimes logic goes for a burton, and you're just left with a statue of Jesus carrying his cross in your hand, and a tedious game of trial and error.

Throw in some very fiddly and particular controls for using items and the laugh-out-loud funny fighting sequences, in which bookworm Professor Robert Langdon takes on the Parisian police force like Bruce Lee, and you can see that some gamers will turn their nose up at this. Having said that, the pedestrian pace, the Sunday afternoon brain-tickling and the warm satisfaction that you get when everything falls into place do keep you going.

It's horribly flawed in many places and unintentionally funny, but we'd much rather play this than something like *X-Men 3*, a movie-licensed game that only tasks the brain with locating the punch button on the joypad.

GM

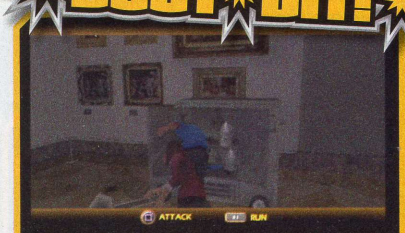


The fighting sections aren't too troublesome, so there's no real need to be stealthy.

Some levels are played with both characters, incorporating some co-operative challenges.

"ROBERT LANGDON TAKES ON THE POLICE LIKE BRUCE LEE"

BEST BIT!



Witnessing the immense strength of Sohpie Neveu – she can fight two policemen at the same time!

And she can even smash open ancient wooden doors with her shoulder. What a woman!

Other formats

What's it like on my machine?

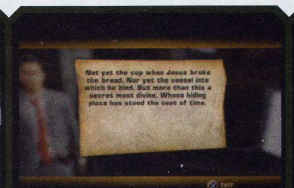
PC It's just the same as the PS2 version, if a little higher-resolution.

XBOX Slightly nicer graphics but that's it.

IT'S NOT GOSPEL

The game doesn't follow the plot of the book that closely and therefore they've got an excuse to include loads more puzzles. They've taken a few liberties but as most of the book is just a history lesson, you can't really blame them.

Just like the early Resident Evils, it pays to examine objects.



Many of the puzzles requires simple code cracking.

You'll have no real advantage having read the book.

This is where it all starts - thank God for that tea towel.

There's load of historical info packed into the game.

Just be thorough and you'll never be in doubt what to look for.

JUDGEMENT

DAVE

GM LOVES

- + Tackling a game with some intelligent puzzles
- + The pedestrain pace of the game
- + Sophie Neveu's ability to punch out any man

GM HATES

- - Some of the puzzles don't make too much sense
- - You can't run more than ten yards without getting out of breath
- - The dull cutscenes

GRAPHICS 5/10

Adequate. Has some of the most boring cutscenes ever, as well.

GAMEPLAY 5/10

More often than not, satisfying and clever. But can be really daft in the 'not'.

LIFESPAN 5/10

Once you've cracked the puzzles, it's a medium sized game with little replay.

OVERALL

63%

Enjoyable movie spin-off due to the puzzles, but also because it's so bad it's good.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:..... X-Men 3, 54%
WORSE THAN:..... Another Code, 83%
WAIT FOR:... Broken Sword: Angel of Death
BEST PRICE:... £23.85, www.amazon.co.uk

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: XBOX • PRICE: £39.99 • DEV: EDGE OF REALITY • PUB: ACTIVISION • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, GC, GBA, PC, DS, PSP • PLAYERS: 1-4

Animals with hockey sticks, hurting other animals. It's simple, basic, and undemanding, but quite fun nonetheless.

OVER THE HEDGE

We're hedging our bets with this one...

Oh dear – it's that season again, kiddie movie tie-in time. However, this isn't to say that there can't be a few good games among all the dross, and with this in mind, *Over The Hedge* doesn't really do too badly.

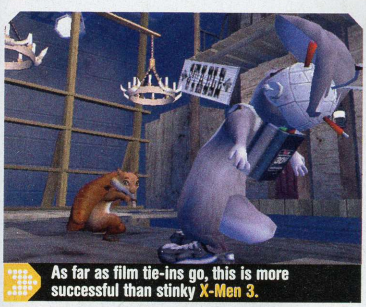
You play as a group of thieving animals, who have awoken from hibernation to find a housing estate has been built on their natural habitat. Typical!

BUSHED

You'll get to control each of them as you solve simple puzzles to bypass security systems and avoid pest control, while filling your pockets with food, tellies and the like.

Mostly, puzzles and combat just involve hitting one button and it's all pretty linear, with little in the way of choice or options.

Once you've adjusted to the occasional dodgy camera angle and old-fashioned button-mashing gameplay, though, it's quite good fun. A bunch of mini games have been thrown in to mix things up a bit and co-operative multi-player will get the kids in training for *Halo 3*. It might not be *Conker's Bad Fur Day* – there's no pottymouthing or bosses built from poo here – but fluffy things with weapons are always good in our book, and *Over The Hedge* satisfies on that level.


As far as film tie-ins go, this is more successful than stinky X-Men 3.

A big bear with a sore head. Never a recipe for good news, we've always found.

JUDGEMENT — TOM

GRAPHICS 70%
More colourful than a peacock dipped in paint and slightly better looking too.

GAMEPLAY 70%
Whack-a-rat... in 3D! Collect things, a bit of driving, you know the score.

LIFESPAN 55%
Not as long as a turtle's but multi-player will keep you coming back.

OVERALL
65%
Fans of the film will love it. A fun experience only let down by its repetitiveness.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:.... Spongebob Squarepants: Lights, Camera, Pants! 54%
WORSE THAN:..... Kameo, 82%
WAIT FOR:..... Arthur And The Minimoys
BEST PRICE:..... £29.99 www.play.com

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £34.99 • DEVELOPER: SCE STUDIOS LONDON • PUBLISHER: SONY • ONLINE: AD-HOC WI-FI • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • PLAYERS: 1-4

Fancy playing in weird stadia 'inspired' by Rome's Coliseum? 'Course you do.

WORLD TOUR SOCCER 2

Funny old game? This is just bizarre!

Perhaps realising that it can't hold a candle to either *FIFA's* flashy presentation or *PES's* untold depth, *World Tour Soccer 2* has opted to dribble down a rather interesting route. It's not quite football as you might know it...

Although you can play the beautiful game vanilla-style if you so desire, *World Tour Soccer 2's* matches are very much goal (no pun intended) based. Take Shot Clock, for instance, where you'll need to net within 15 seconds as a timer counts down. Or how about All Rounder – where your entire team has to touch the ball before a goal can be counted?

Thinking it all sounds a mite convoluted? You're right – it is. Amazingly though, despite all this complication, it's rather addictive...

FANTASY FOOTY

WTS 2 is a blast. Each and every sliding tackle feels as epic as *that* Bobby Moore challenge on Jarzinho, while 30-yard Stevie G-esque piledrivers are a common occurrence. Such a shame the footy action feels about as authentic as a Man U shirt bought in Thailand...

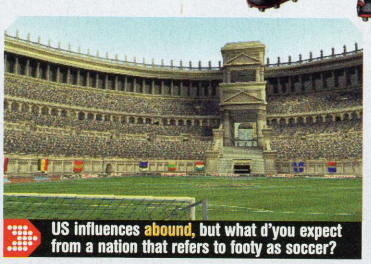
Lampard bundles home, but can England get enough pointage to win the challenge?

TOUR-SOME

Successful passes, free-flowing moves and scorching goals rack up points, and more than ever before, the incentive is there to play attractive possession football.

Since this is a game that centres around flowing footy and breaking the back of the net, you rarely have to worry about conceding any thanks to the opposition being guilty of misses more shocking than Marlon Harewood's howler in the FA Cup Final.

All in all, *WTS 2* confirms the series' reputation as occasionally entertaining yet fatally flawed 'just one more go' footy that's best not taken *too* seriously.


US influences abound, but what d'you expect from a nation that refers to footy as soccer?

JUDGEMENT — ROB

GRAPHICS 75%
Player likenesses surpass PSP *FIFA World Cup*, despite the dead eyes.

GAMEPLAY 55%
Pick up and play novelty aimed firmly at the on-the-go casual gamer.

LIFESPAN 55%
Huge, reasonably varied, quantities of increasingly irksome challenges.

OVERALL
62%
Betters the original, but still rooted in the Second Division compared to *FIFA* and *PES*.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..... World Tour Soccer Challenge Edition ,61%
WORSE THAN:..... PES5 , 80%
WAIT FOR:..... PES6
BEST PRICE:..... £29.99, Play.com

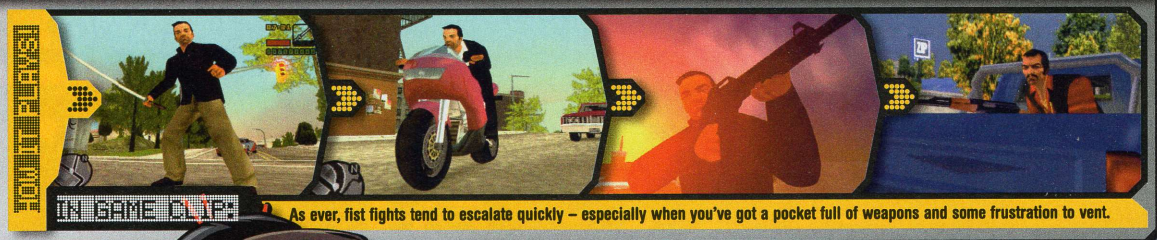
REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £19.99
DEVELOPER: ROCKSTAR NORTH/LEEDS • PUBLISHER: ROCKSTAR GAMES • ONLINE: NO
OTHER FORMATS: PSP • WEB: WWW.ROCKSTARGAMES/LIBERTCITYSTORIES/ • PLAYERS: 1

WHAT IS IT?

Pretty much a straight conversion of the PSP game, about Salvatore Leone's rise to power.

- The maps from *Liberty City Stories*
- All the special features from *GTA: Vice City*



As ever, fist fights tend to escalate quickly – especially when you've got a pocket full of weapons and some frustration to vent.

grand theft auto™ Liberty City Stories

Well, just one story, really – but it's a cracker...

Squashed into PSP like a tiger in a suitcase, *Liberty City Stories* was a technical marvel – one of the world's biggest games, given minimal twiddling, could fit in your pocket. Now Rockstar are giving non-PSP owners the chance to chart the rise of the Leones, but the technological alchemy's no longer there. Should you still buy it? Probably.

LCS was scaled back on the PSP, but you had to expect that – flattened onto a disc the size of a chicken McNugget, there were always going to be compromises. On the PS2, though, there are disappointments. You can't swim, for instance. The riots have gone. Skydiving, planes and dating are out. The radio station, although it's decent, offers up boy band parodies and classical whimsy instead of hours of licensed music. And so on. Basically, this is *Vice City*-level *GTA*, introducing new things to *Liberty City* – bikes, for instance, open up all sorts of new shortcuts – but falling short of the do-absolutely-anything gob-smackery of *San Andreas*.

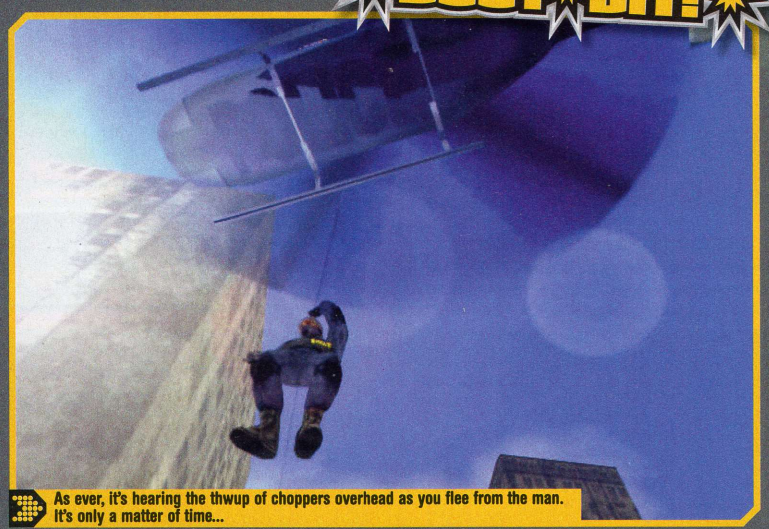
PORTABLE PROBLEM

As such, it misses out on some of the best moments of any *GTA* – the thrills of discovering entirely new things to do, places to go or vehicles to use. Similarly, there isn't much on offer in the way of new mission types – after three hours of play, you'll be seeing the same variations on escorting, shooting, driving really fast or assassinating people again and again. Bear in mind, too, that a lot of these are 'portable-optimised', meaning that they very rarely last more than about five

GIVE ME LIBERTY...

This is the first time in *LCS* you'll be able to use certain features that were introduced in *Vice City* (and that were obviously absent in *GTA3*). You can ride bikes, which obviously give you more options in narrow alleyways, taxis return to whisk you back to mission start points, and pizza delivery and rubbish collection make an appearance too. Basically, there's plenty o' stuff to see and do. Mint!

BEST BIT!

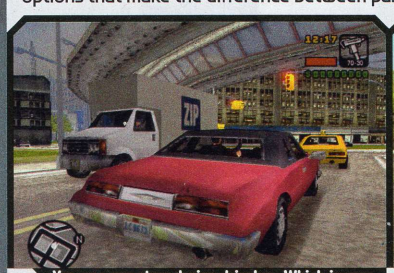


As ever, it's hearing the thwup of choppers overhead as you flee from the man. It's only a matter of time...

And there's a smattering of *San Andreas*-style sunshine effects.

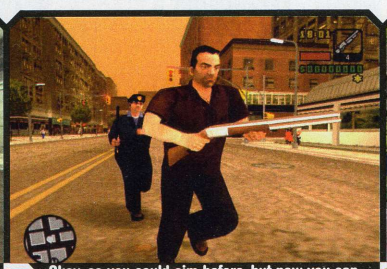
COMPLETE CONTROL

Hurrah for the Dualshock – with a full complement of buttons, *Liberty City Stories* has finally got all those subtle little control options that make the difference between passing or failing a mission.



Yes, you can steer during drivebys. Which is very important, as any fool knows.

You can look behind as you reverse out of the pay 'n' spray. Stops you nudging parked cops.



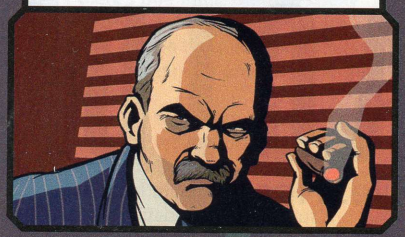
Okay, so you could aim before, but now you can actually see the little cursors. It all helps.

And you can actually see what's going on when it's raining. Which is handy.

GTA LIBERTY CITY STORIES

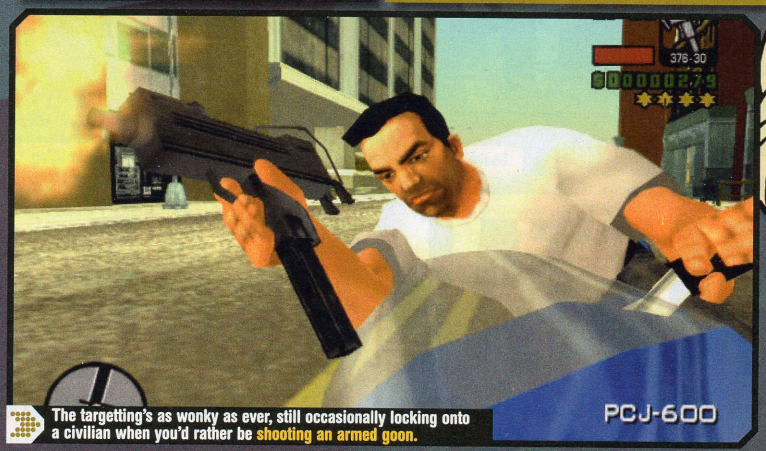
THE DON

Liberty City hasn't quite got an all-star voice cast – Tony is voiced by a bit-part actor from *Spin City* – but you'll recognise Frank Vincent as Salvatore Leone. Frank's best known for getting a kicking from Joe Pesci in *two* separate films (*Raging Bull* and *Goodfellas*) before getting his revenge by burying the pint-sized goon alive in *Casino*.



PUNCH DRUNK

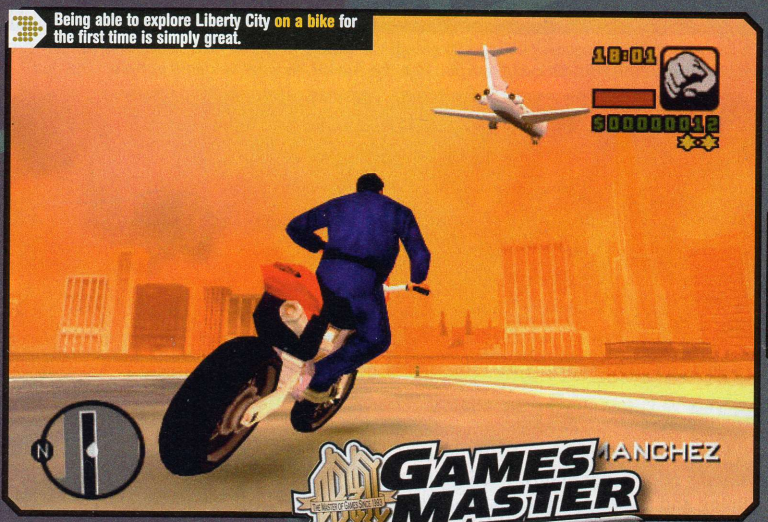
There are a million ways to succeed in Liberty City. But most of them involve cracking men's heads.



The targetting's as wonky as ever, still occasionally locking onto a civilian when you'd rather be shooting an armed goon.

minutes – a little upsetting for anyone who likes things a bit more in-depth. You might also be a bit upset at the lack of empire-building – with very few plot twists or change of employers, you spend nearly the entire game working for Salvatore Leone. Some might argue that this makes things more focused, but it can also make things a bit dull.

The thing is, though, Rockstar know all this, and aren't making any apologies for it. They're really releasing *LCS* on PS2 to stop people without PSPs feeling left out of playing what's, ultimately, an important bit of *GTA* mythos and an excellent game. The slightly improved control of the bigger version just about cancels out the fact that it hasn't got the portable version's multiplayer, and you can't argue with the fact that it's only a bargain-tastic 20 quid. Nice. GM



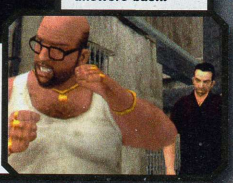
Being able to explore Liberty City on a bike for the first time is simply great.

OI! TONY

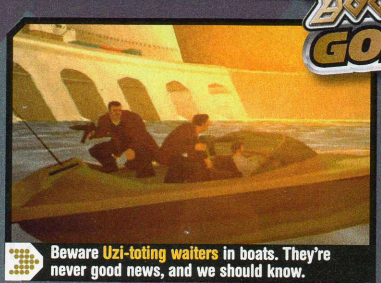
Less confident than CJ and aggressive than Tommy, Tony's actually sort of loveable.

He's constantly getting bullied by the Leone family, and rarely answers back.

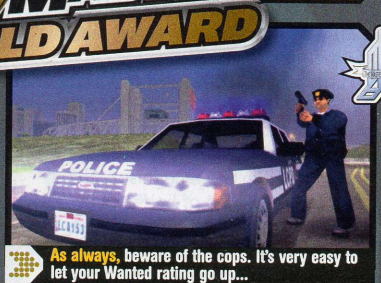
But he's still a lot chattier than *GTA3's* mute, silent-but-deadly hero, Fido.



Ooh, planes! But can you fly them? Sadly not. But you can fly helicopters...



Beware Uzi-toting waiters in boats. They're never good news, and we should know.



As always, beware of the cops. It's very easy to let your Wanted rating go up...

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES

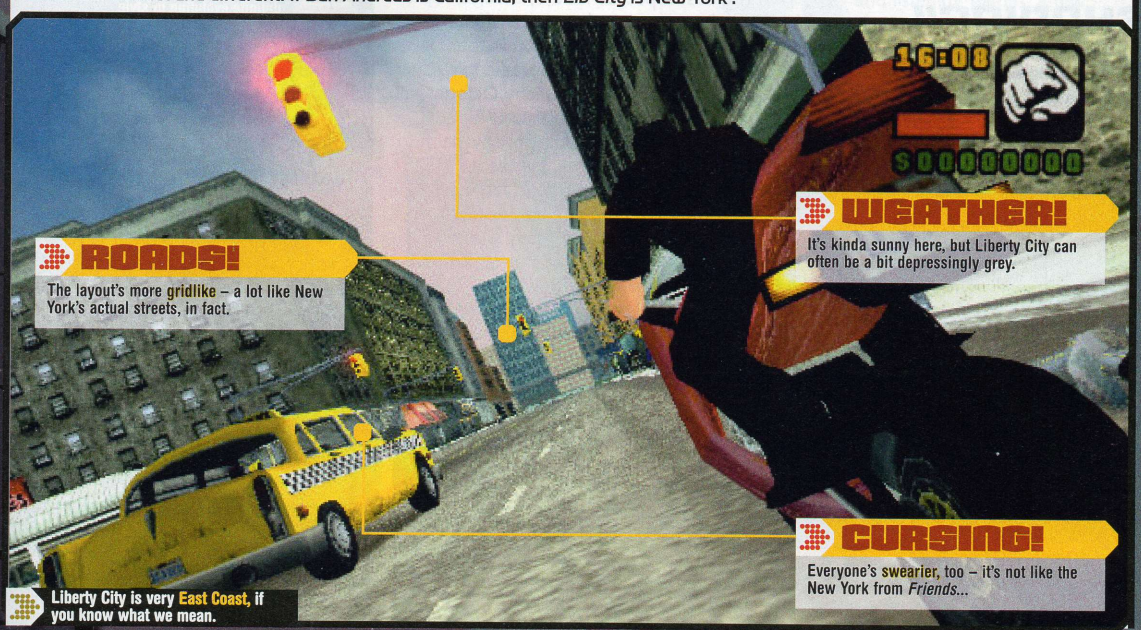
- Swinging a chainsaw
- Riding bikes through Liberty City
- Checking out all the new detail on a lovely big screen

GM HATES

- Accidentally aiming at pedestrians
- Escort missions that always go wrong
- Working for The Man

BRIGHT LIGHTS, BIG CITY

What's best about the *GTA* series is that everything – weather, outfits, pedestrian chatter – makes all of its cities feel distinct and different. If *San Andreas* is California, then *Lib City* is New York.



ROADS!
The layout's more gridlike – a lot like New York's actual streets, in fact.

WEATHER!
It's kinda sunny here, but Liberty City can often be a bit depressingly grey.

CURSING!
Everyone's swearier, too – it's not like the New York from *Friends*...

Liberty City is very East Coast, if you know what we mean.

GRAPHICS

A little bit washed out compared to the lovely *'Dreas*, but otherwise peachy.

GAMEPLAY

Open-ended and hugely varied – it's classic *GTA* with plenty of innovation.

LIFESPAN

Not quite as huge as *San Andreas*, but it'll keep you going for a while.

OVERALL

90%

A sidestep instead of a leap forward – but a great sidestep nonetheless.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Mercenaries: Playground Of Destruction, 90%
WORSE THAN: ..... GTA: San Andreas, 98%
WAIT FOR: ..... Grand Theft Auto 4 (2007)
BEST PRICE: ..... £20.00, Amazon.co.uk

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • **FORMAT:** PSP • **PRICE:** £34.99
DEVELOPER: KONAMI • **PUBLISHER:** KONAMI • **ONLINE:** NO • **SPECIAL:** 3D EYEPIECE
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • **WEB:** WWW.KONAMI.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-2

THE STORY

The sequel to turn-based *MGS* – Snake's caught a dose of amnesia and been roped into a suicide mission.

- More than 500 cards to collect
- Special cardboard lady-binoculars

IN GAME SHOT

Snake unleashes The Fury on a guard two feet away... and misses. D'oh.

METAL GEAR ACID 2™

All hands on deck – it's *MGS*, poker-style. Again.

STACK 'EM!

With hundreds of cards to choose from, careful selection is the essence of a successful mission. You can replay levels in time attack or kill-everyone modes, so you'll need to reshuffle your hand to deal with all the possibilities.

Select your deck – the computer'll automate this, but we prefer to add aggressive kit.

Every card has an associated cost, and some can be used for more than one thing.

New cards enhance others – for instance, making your 'equip' card 'cost' less time.

PLAY YOUR CARDS RIGHT

A lengthy tutorial section takes you through the basics of *Metal Gear Solid* with cards – from walking and crawling right up to card-combinations and cold-blooded murder. But the fun bit, as ever, is killing people. Like this.

Even if he isn't packing a weapon, Snake can unleash some fist once he's at close range.

From behind, Snake can use his neck-snap attack – as long as he's not been noticed...

From the front, it's best to equip the 'evade' card, to automatically dodge bullets up close.

Even after playing the original *Acid*, ordering Snake around with a deck of cards still feels odd. In our brains, *MGS* is about timing and nerve, dashing past guards as they turn their backs – not watching them stuck there like chumps, waiting for their go.

And when you're used to having an M-22 a button-click away, rifling through the deck in the hope of finding one can be a bit frustrating. The one thing that every *MGS* fan will recognise is the yawnsome amount of lip-flapping that goes on, and that's hardly a bonus. That said, *Acid 2* remedies a lot of the things that made its precursor so fiddlesome. Opening doors, crawling, standing up and climbing ladders no longer cost precious action points, giving you more free rein to dash about without getting stuck in open areas. The camera's been tweaked, too, addressing those tricksy stuck-behind-a-corner moments with full analogue nub-based twirlability. The look's been enhanced, too – murky greys make things a bit squinty on the PSP, so Konami have ingeniously introduced some sharp, clean-cut cel-shading, which improves visibility no end.

Even with two men at full auto, it'll take half a dozen turns for Snake to keel over.

"KONAMI HAVE INTRODUCED CLEAN-CUT CEL-SHADING"

BEST BIT!

Though the new artistic style makes alerts a thing of beauty, you really can't beat taking down a guard before he even knows you're there.

WELL CARD

The best aspect of *Acid 2*, though, is the boggling amount of cards on offer – a virtual-trouser-rupturing 500 in total. From The End and Liquid Snake to obscure characters like Decoy Octopus, all have their place and all have to be collected before you can properly claim to have finished the game. Excellent.

Polished, improved, and far less frustrating than the original, *Acid* is well worth a look. And, hey, there's one Kojima-san staple you might be glad to see – an optional lady-ogling mode that almost works in 3D.

Just don't use that on the bus.

Bizarrely, you can't stab guards to death while they're asleep. Snake's just too sporting.

Other Zombies

Or try these:

PS2	World Series Poker	45%
GBA	Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel Academy	65%

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES

- Collecting cards
- The new look
- Lady-mode!

GM HATES

- Missing from point-blank range
- Accidentally blowing ourselves up
- Searching for a decent card
- The constant talking

GRAPHICS 80%
Crispy and visible. The cel-shading's a definite evolution in style.

GAMEPLAY 82%
Takes a while to get used to, but streamlined controls make it worth it.

LIFESPAN 80%
Stacks of modes and challenges ensure you'll be fiddling about for ages.

OVERALL

76%

A huge improvement on the first game – not for everyone, but the best *MGS* on PSP.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:..... Metal Gear Acid, 75%
WORSE THAN:..Metal Gear Solid 3: Snake Eater , 95%
WAIT FOR:...Metal Gear Solid 4 (next year)
BEST PRICE:...£29.99, www.amazon.co.uk

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: DS • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: FUSE GAMES • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO
ONLINE: HIGH SCORE COMPETITION • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE
WEB: WWW.METROIDPRIMEPINBALL.COM • PLAYERS: 1 (1-8 WI-FI)

METROID PRIME PINBALL

Can Samus turn pinball wizard?

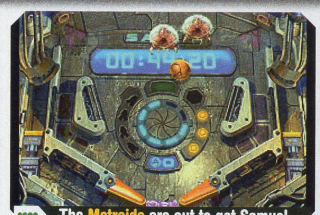
If there's one thing *Metroid*'s sexy heroine Samus knows about, it's balls. *Morph* balls, that is, so who better to star in a pinball game than Ms. Aran?

Aside from the wimpy so-called 'rumble' pack (which slots into your DS's GBA cart socket), *Metroid Pinball* is a presentational triumph. The ball physics are suitably meaty, it's got a sick rock soundtrack and the few tables that exist are admittedly impeccably presented.

PINBALLS

Multiball and some of the minigames provide an amusing diversion, but some of the frustrating creature thwacking and boss fights don't fare as well (every time *Metroid Mania* or *Parasite Purge* pops up your heart will sink). Although the dual screen might seem perfect for pinball, all that high speed flicking between screens can be a little migraine inducing. That said, however, this does play a solid game of pinball, it's just a little lacking compared to, say, *Pokemon Pinball* on the Game Boy Color.

Ultimately, we'd have to say that only big *Metroid* fans are really recommended to flip their paddles over this one. GM



The Metroids are out to get Samus! Flip into them to prevail.

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GRAPHICS 90%
It's *Prime*... but it's pinball! A delectable treat for any *Metroid* fan.

GAMEPLAY 70%
Flipping great fun for a bit, but minigames are choresome.

LIFESPAN 30%
Only three 'proper' tables. High scores and unlockable tables.

OVERALL

74%

Aimed more at *Metroid* fans than pinball aficionados, and it shows. Flashy but insipid.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Mario Super Ball
WORSE THAN: ..... Pokémon Pinball, 88%
WAIT FOR: ..... Super Monkey Pinball?
BEST PRICE: ..... £24.99, Import Madness

THAT'S BOSS

Battling it out time attack-stylee against this hulking Omega Pirate in the Phazon Mines is hugely underwhelming.

BEST BIT!

Mmm... *Metroid Pinball* captures the quintessential essence of *Prime* to perfection. Now, where's that darn Ridley?

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: SONY • PUBLISHER: SONY • ONLINE: NO
SPECIAL: USB MIC • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.PLAYSTATION.JP/SCEJ/TITLE/TALKMAN/ • PLAYERS: 1

TalkMan

Sprechen sie foreign?

Let's face it: foreign languages are stupid. Masculine? Feminine? Accents? Umlauts? It's a minefield of complication. If that's your attitude, you need *Talkman*. Not so much a dictionary as a friendly-faced translator, it's the shy person/idiot's answer to parlezing in Francais, Deutsch, Italiano, Espagnol and Japanese.

It'll take your English words and spit them out in flawless Euro-speak, then let your newfound friend reply via the magic of PSP.

That's the theory, anyway. In practice, although the attached mic works reasonably well, the hassle and embarassment factor of whispering into a handheld means you'll quickly abandon speech in favour of simply prodding the buttons. The layout of the menus, combined with the lengthy loading pauses, mean you'll have to find a patient baguette-botherer, and the 'emotional content' option's simply bizarre. What works much better is the learning aspect of *Talkman* – with more than 3,000 phrases to practice via pronunciation and listening games, a few days of dedicated practice should give you the skills to leave your PSP at home while you go out and talk proper foreign. GM

You're probably better off going out to find some actual foreign friends.

JUDGEMENT

JOEL

GRAPHICS 75%
Couldn't they have picked a cuter mascot? Like a talking prawn?

GAMEPLAY 55%
The pronunciation games are weirdly compulsive, but the interface is fiddly.

LIFESPAN 50%
With several languages and a stack of phrases, it's exhaustive enough.

OVERALL

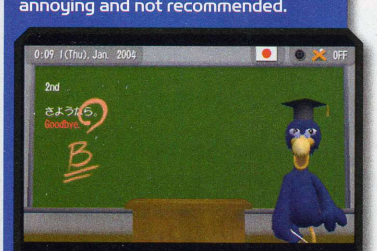
75%

Technically impressive, but perhaps a bit misjudged – you need a sympathetic listener.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Miming
WORSE THAN: ..... A proper phrasebook
WAIT FOR: ..... Your French GCSE
BEST PRICE: ..... £29.99, Amazon.co.uk

ALLEZ! UP!

For properly masochistic linguists, we'd suggest *Talkman's* Alarm Clock mode. The idea's simple - you set it, Max wakes you up with a fanfare, and then he *won't shut up* until you offer the right multiple choice response to whatever he's asking you. Quite annoying and not recommended.



This is Max. Give him an opportunity and he'll squawk on for ages. Grr.

BEST BIT!

Using the pronunciation game to get your accent inflection-perfect. You'll learn those Frenchies yet, by golly...

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: XBOX • PRICE: £39.99
DEVELOPER: BUGBEAR ENTERTAINMENT • PUBLISHER: EMPIRE • ONLINE: YES • SPECIAL: NONE
OTHER FORMATS: PS2, PC • WEB: WWW.FLATOUTGAME.COM • PLAYERS: 1-4 (1-8 ONLINE)

XBOX | PS2 | PC

THE LOWDOWN

Destruction derby racing that encourages you to smash up as much of each course as you possibly can.

- 34 smash-up-able vehicles
- New online play

IN GAME CLIP

Smash your way through an office for a crazy shortcut!

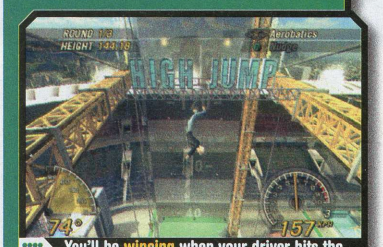
FLATOUT 2™

FLATTY

What was started in the first *Flatout* game has been continued in an even bigger way, with a total of 12 different events in the sequel. They might be different but there's one common and painful goal...

Build up as much speed as possible in your run up to the target.

Then press A to launch your driver through the windscreen of the car.



You'll be wincing when your driver hits the floor in a crumpled heap.

Other Formats

Or try these:

360	Burnout: Revenge	95%
PS2	Twisted Metal: Black	83%

Going flat out on speed, smash-ups and driver injuries...

Gran Turismo has you passing a driving test before you're allowed on the race track, encouraging precise driving. *Flatout 2* has a sort of anti-driving test – telling you to smash into as much scenery as possible to earn nitro boosts. Shortly after that you take part in a high-jumping event in which the higher your driver lands after flying out of the windscreen of your car, the more points you score.

It's clear what *Flatout's* intentions are, then – to put fun and destruction first. Surprisingly, *Flatout's* handling is more skewed towards realism than similar games, but that just serves to make it feel like *Project Gotham* with pile-ups, or *Sega Rally* with turbo boosts. True, this might not be quite so polished – there are too few themes to the courses and the mud and water effects are nothing special – but the handling is brilliant, which in turn makes tearing through muddy countryside and around cities a lot of fun.

The game's instantly accessible – you don't need to place first or even third to move on to new events most of the time. But getting placed does give you more cash to spend on new cars or upgrades. It's not all racing either – there are destruction derbies which are just big smash-fests, as well as events where you play darts and go bowling, for example, by shooting your driver through his own windscreen.

It's the most fun we've had with a driving game since *Burnout: Revenge*, and if you like wrecking cars, this is the racing game for you. GM

"PLAY DARTS BY SHOOTING YOUR DRIVER THROUGH HIS OWN WINDSCREEN"

DESTRUCTION!

When you start the game, you only have enough cash to buy a clapped-out destruction derby car. By placing near the top in each event or race, you earn money to upgrade tyres, engine and so on, then eventually a new car. The game's AI is good enough to keep you replaying until you win. Certain drivers will seek revenge if you knock them off the road. Races can be won and lost in the final seconds thanks to the nitro boost and the fact that you can smash other drivers out of the way.

With some prize money, you can improve the handling and power of any clapped out motor.

The destruction doesn't even end when you've crossed the finish line.

BEST BIT!

Flatout 2 does violence well, so events like the destruction derby are particularly good fun, especially in multi-player.

Build up boost by smashing down fences, lampposts and pretty much everything else.

Tracks feature shortcuts, like going through a petrol station followed by a massive explosion.

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES

- The handling of the vehicles
- Being able to smash through everything!
- The range of events and introduction of online play

GM HATES

- The car reset button means some crashes hardly slow you down
- Feels like AI lets you catch up if you're losing
- Not enough variety in course themes

GRAPHICS
It's a good-looking game only let down by some iffy collision detection.

GAMEPLAY
Plenty of variety, great car handling and physics, and lots of destruction.

LIFESPAN
Good single-player and online will extend its lifespan even more.

OVERALL

81%

Better than its predecessor, *Flatout 2* is like a brasher but uglier brother to *Burnout*.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: .....Flatout, 75%
WORSE THAN: .....Burnout: Revenge, 95%
WAIT FOR: ...Need For Speed Carbon (TBC)
BEST PRICE: .....£29.96 , www.gameseek.co.uk

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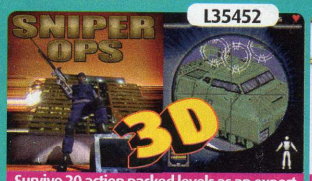
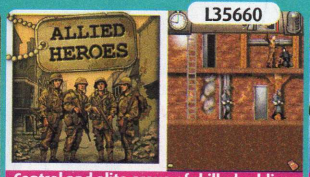


L35452

Survive 20 action packed levels as an expert police sniper trying to save innocent citizens



L35660

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L34708

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L35875

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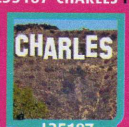
L34428



L35187

L34440

FOOTY TOPS!

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L34984

L34983

L35936

L36001

TRUETONES

E.g. L35916 TO 8007

WANNA SEND TO A FRIEND?
E.g. D35916 0770234567 TO 8007

L35916	G-O-O-O-O-O-A-A-L-L-L-L
L35815	GOD SAVE THE QUEEN
L35915	FANS CHEERING!
L35979	OE-OE-OE-OE
L35983	REFEREES ARE B******S
L35980	WE ARE THE CHAMPIONS!
L33175	BURP
L33173	FART
L33925	VOMITS
L33702	EVIL LAUGH
L33927	FBI
L33173	FART
L35661	HAPPY BIRTHDAY
L35046	I WILL ALWAYS LOVE YOU

ANIMATED BABES

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L35223

L35398

L35399

L35401

WALLPAPERS

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ENGLAND THEMES

L35818 L35819

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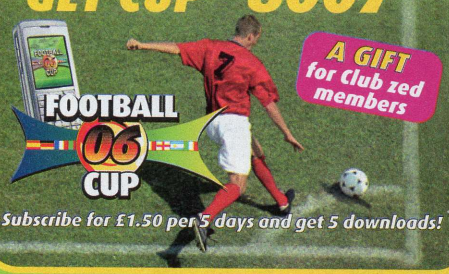

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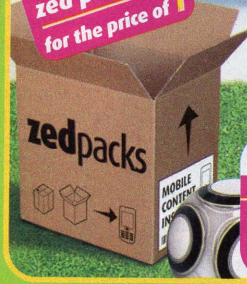

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find more at www.getzed.co.uk

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £34.99
DEVELOPER: SONY • PUBLISHER: SONY • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NONE
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.LOCOROCO.JP • PLAYERS: 1

PSone

What is it?

Your aim is to guide your Loco Rocos through each level by tilting the world.

- Collect parts to build Loco Roco houses
- 6 different coloured Loco Roco and mini-games to unlock

How it plays

In game clip

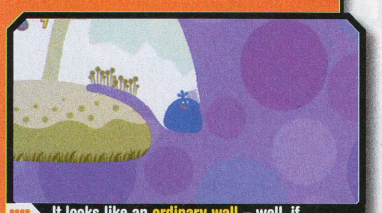
Too fat to fit through a gap? Summon some lightning to frighten your Loco Roco into breaking apart.

LocoRoco

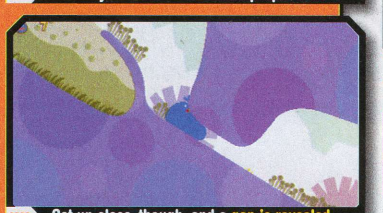
Cute as a kitten and even more fun to play with!

Secrets!

It's easy to get through a level in *Loco Roco*, but not nearly as easy to finish with all 20 Loco Rocos intact and all secrets found. Secrets are usually hidden behind false walls – they look solid from a distance but are revealed as false up close. There are also hidden characters, platforms and fruit hidden around the levels, and some sections can only be reached if you've managed to grow your Loco Roco to a certain size first.



It looks like an ordinary wall – well, if ordinary walls were blue with purple dots...

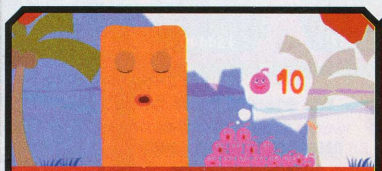


Get up close, though, and a gap is revealed for you to squish yourself underneath.

Hidden areas sometimes contain lots of fruit so you can expand to maximum size.

The more the merrier

The more Loco Rocos you can absorb, the better. Growing your main blob by accruing more and more individual Loco Rocos allows you to do lots more than if you were a small and ineffectual – if wonderfully cute – blob.



With enough Loco Rocos, this platform will lower for your pleasure. Look at the eyes!

The sun requires 15 Loco Rocos to open its eyes. You'll get a rare Loco House part, though.

At the end of each level, your performance is rated. You can return at any time to better it.

It's our view that if it takes longer than half an hour to get into a game and start enjoying it, it's a game with problems. Using that principle, we reckon it's fair to say that the quicker you start enjoying a game, the better it is. *Tetris*, *Mario Kart*, *Grand Theft Auto* – they're all games that have you mastering the basic controls and immersed within minutes, and they're all brilliant.

Loco Roco though, breaks a new record for us. We rolled our squishy yellow Loco Roco off his first platform, ate some fruit (which made him grow a little in size) and listened to him sing along to the brilliantly bizarre background music (sung in a made-up language and reminiscent of Japanese children on helium)... and we fell in love immediately.

The basic premise of the game – and it is beautifully basic – is to guide your Loco Rocos through each level, not with direct control but by using the trigger buttons to tilt the world left and right. Your squishy Loco Rocos are like a cross between a blob of jelly and a space hopper, complete with eyes and a surprising amount of personality even with such featureless faces. You begin with one small Loco Roco, but eating flowers along the way makes them multiply, and your one little Loco Roco starts looking like one fat, blobby and very happy Loco Roco. Which is all very well for him as he's clearly not watching his waistline, but not so good for you

Puzzling

Puzzles in the game usually involve changing the shape of your Loco Roco to squeeze into a gap, or transforming from giant blob to little blobs at the right moment.

This owl will swallow you whole if you get close. But it's not necessarily a bad thing...

He'll spit you out a different shape, which makes rolling more difficult but means you can fit into odd-shaped gaps.

Getting hit by these crushing spikes won't kill you, as you might expect...

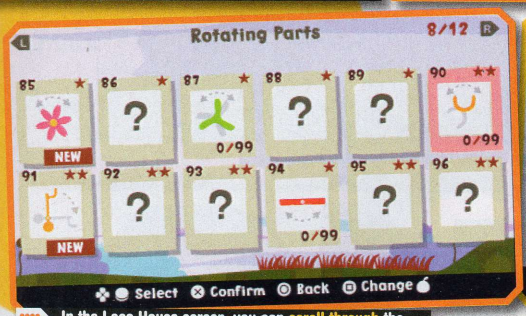
...but it will break you into little blobs so you'll fall down the small gaps that are coming up. Doh!

Loco levels

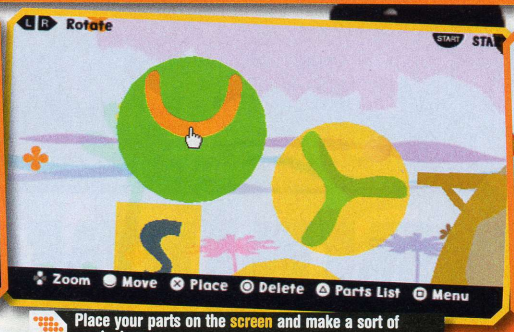
Each of the levels in the game is markedly different to the last. You might be in a slippery ice world where you can get up loads of speed to slide around, and then find yourself in the soft stomach of a whale, dodging giant teeth.

LOCO LIVING

Throughout the game you collect Loco House parts – some are easy to find, others are much rarer. You can also use fruit that you've collected to pay to play the mini-games and win new parts for your house.



In the Loco House screen, you can scroll through the house parts you've found or won.



Place your parts on the screen and make a sort of wacky house.

Then invite your Loco Rocos to play. If you've constructed a winner they'll have loads of fun.

LOCO-MOTION

Instead of controlling the Loco Roco, you're controlling their actual world. Press the left trigger to tilt the world left, right trigger to tilt it right and press both triggers together to make your Loco Roco jump. The longer you hold them down, the higher your blob will jump.

Holding down both triggers will make your Loco Roco jump.

Holding down the right trigger raises the left side of the world.

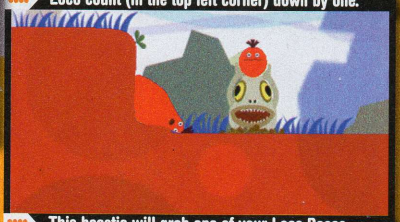
Press the left trigger and the world tilts up on the right. And look! Isn't the sun happy? Everything in *Loco Roco* will make you smile.

That's pretty much all there is to it, although a couple of the face buttons are used to 'disassemble' your Loco Roce and then 'reform' him (or her, or it).

MR BLOBBY

There are some seriously scary inhabitants in Loco Roco land.

Getting chomped on by one of these will knock your Loco count (in the top left corner) down by one.



This beastie will grab one of your Loco Rocos, giving you a few seconds to get him back.

"THIS GAME IS CUTER THAN A DORMOUSE RIDING BAREBACK ON AN ANDREX PUPPY"

when you reach a gap that he's too fat to fit through.

Cue your most important power in the game. The ability to make lightning strike, which causes your Loco Rocos to split up and lets you guide them through narrow sections. Once you want them back in one handy blob, summoning an earthquake frightens your Loco Rocos into huddling back into one big, happy ball. Yes, this game is cuter than a dormouse riding bareback on an Andrex puppy.

A large part of what makes *Loco Roco* such a joy is its complete lack of traditional gaming obstacles. Levels are largely squishy, curvy, cushioned affairs with no holes of doom to fall down or bad guys to shoot. Even when you do come across some moving spikes, being impaled doesn't kill you, it simply squishes you into little Loco Rocos. When you do eventually meet a beastie who bites a chunk out of your Loco Roco and munches away on it, it's a seriously disturbing moment – fortunately they're few and far between and munching another flower regenerates your lost Loco.

Without the dangers, though, you might be wondering where the challenge is in *Loco Roco*. The real point to the game is going back and exploring every last inch of the levels in order to find their many secrets.

It's a brilliant game – a simple but challenging cross between puzzler and platformer that's been painted generously with happy smiley faces. We'd challenge even Alan Sugar to play it without wearing a stupid grin on his face. GM

Alternatives

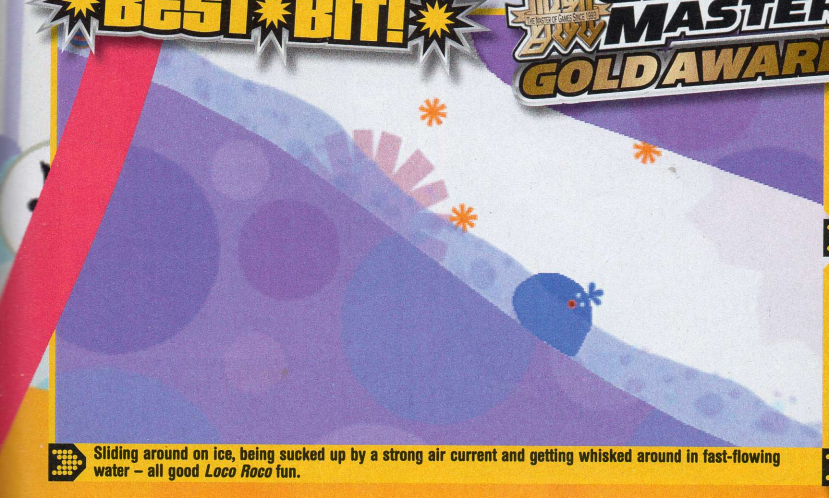
Also try:

DS *New Super Mario Bros.*, reviewed elsewhere in this issue, is classic 2D platforming at its best.

Or try these:

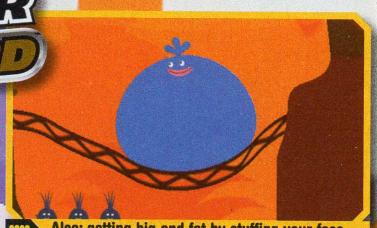
GBA	Yoshi's Story	91%
PS2	Jak and Daxter	87%

BEST BIT!



Sliding around on ice, being sucked up by a strong air current and getting whisked around in fast-flowing water – all good *Loco Roco* fun.

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD



Also: getting big and fat by stuffing your face, then blobbing around like a happy fat blob.

Plus! Watching your mini Loco Rocos fall through machinery, screaming as they go.

JUDGEMENT

GM LOVES

+ Rolling around a world that's like a big squishy feather pillow
+ Watching the Loco Roco sing to smiley mountains
+ Completing a level!

GM HATES

- Building a Loco House with the parts you've collected is a bit of an anti-climax

GRAPHICS 92%

You won't find a cuter or more satisfying 2D platformer on the PSP.

GAMEPLAY 98%

Simple, brilliant and perfectly suited to the PSP with tilting, rolling gameplay.

LIFESPAN 90%

Each level is different enough that you'll want to see them all.

OVERALL

92%

A must have for the PSP, you can't fail to enjoy *Loco Roco*. Beautiful, simple, funny.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Archer Maclean's Mercury , 83%

WORSE THAN: ..... Nothing!

WAIT FOR: ..... Ratchet and Clank

BEST PRICE: ... £29.99, www.amazon.co.uk

OUT: NOW (IN JAPAN) • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: AROUND £40 • DEVELOPER: KCET
PUBLISHER: KONAMI • ONLINE: YES • SPECIAL: NOTHING • OTHER FORMATS: NONE
WEB: WWW.KONAMI.JP/GS/GAME/WE10 • PLAYERS: 1-8

What is it?

It's the Japanese version of *PES!*

- New teams include Togo, Angola, Trinidad and Tobago
- New randomizer features allowing you to make instant super-teams

Footballer

IN-GAME CLIPS

Konami are brilliant at making the top stars feel and move differently than the other players.

WINNING ELEVEN 10

The only available cure for *PES* impatience!

DETAILS

As with any *PES/WE* update, the differences from the last game are very subtle, but they're always intended to create a more realistic and enjoyable experience. In that respect, this doesn't disappoint.

The cross-field passes have a much lower trajectory so can be hit with far more pace.

The chipped through-balls are now more effective around the penalty area.

You have to be far more aware of the position of your player when heading the ball.

If you're wondering why *Winning Eleven 10* looks very familiar to another popular football game, it's because *Winning Eleven* is, essentially, the Japanese *PES*. While *PES* comes out in the UK in autumn, Japan gets its dose of football magic in late spring, and *WE* is usually an improvement on the latest *PES* and an indicator of where the series is going.

As with any game from the *PES/WE* series the differences from its predecessor are subtle but significant. The first one that is noticeable is that it's far easier to run past defenders with players with high dribble speeds. Not many tricks are needed, just direct running. This leads to a slicker feel to the game and players like Henry and Messi being more effective. It's also harder to defend as the ball never seems to be won cleanly.

IN THE ONION BAG

Rather than the cloud-scraping passes of previous games, the long-range passing is lower and quicker. Crosses haven't improved, but you seem to have more control over the receiving players to make sure they're in the right position to connect with the ball.

Most of the changes make for a better game, apart from shots that tend to balloon over the bar too often, too many spill-shot goals and some shoddy goalkeeping.

Despite these drawbacks, though, this is brilliant footy. However, we wouldn't really recommend this as import purchase, as all the player names, commentary and menus are in Japanese. We say be patient and wait for *PES*. You just know that it's going to be *amazing*.

THE RANDOMIZER

One of the new features in the game is a Randomizer option that lets you make an all-star team from selected leagues, instantly. You can either select four countries from which to take the players from or a certain league. The computer will then select an all-star squad from the perimeters you've set out. It's great for mixing up multiplayer games, ensuring no-one gains a distinct advantage from playing with certain teams.

For the sake of this demonstration we've edited names so you can see who's been selected.

It's good for trying out players from different leagues – great for Master League scouting.

JUDGEMENT

DAVE

GM LOVES

+ The extra detail
+ The lovely cross-field passing
+ Getting a sneak peak at what *PES 6* will be like

GM HATES

- Struggling with the Menus
- Not being to get our heads round the Master League
- The new dodgy keepers

GRAPHICS 85%
There's plenty of new animations while the player models just get better.

GAMEPLAY 78%
Slippier than *PES 5* and takes a bit to get used to. Poor goalkeeping, mind.

LIFESPAN 95%
Limitless and you'll end up learning some Japanese in the process.

OVERALL

90%

The same *Pro Evo* magic with a more flowing feel. We'd advise you to wait for *PES 6*, mind.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:.....FIFA World Cup 2006, 82%
WORSE THAN:.....PES 5, 96%
WAIT FOR:.....PES 6
BEST PRICE:.....£33, www.hk-sang.com

"DESPITE DRAWBACKS, THIS IS BRILLIANT FOOTY"

BEST BIT! GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD

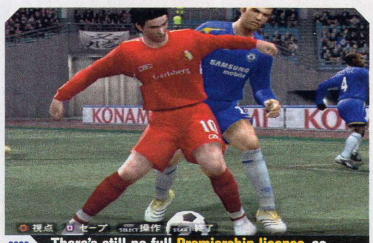
Getting to grips with the new quicker and lower long-passing, which makes players like Alonso much more effective to use.

Other Formats

Or try these:

PS2	Pro Evolution Soccer 5	96%
CUBE	FIFA Street 2	80%
XBOX	FIFA World Cup 2006	82%

It's far easier to run around a defender using a burst of pace than it was before.



There's still no full Premiership license, so just use your imagination...

YOU DIE IN THE GAME - YOU DIE FOR REAL.
STAY ALIVE
15 Contains sustained moderate horror
PLAY IT TO DEATH.
HOLLYWOOD PICTURES SPYGLASS ENTERTAINMENT AND ENDGAME ENTERTAINMENT PRESENT A WONDERLAND SOUND AND VISION PRODUCTION A BARBER/BIRNBAUM PRODUCTION "STAY ALIVE" JON FOSTER SAMAIRE ARMSTRONG FRANKIE MUNIZ JAMIE SIMPSON MILO VENTIMIGLIA WITH SOPHIA BUSH AND ADAM GOLDBERG CASTING BY MARK BENNETT MUSIC BY JOHN FRIZZELL EDITED BY HARVEY ROSENSTOCK PRODUCTION DESIGNER BRUTON JONES DIRECTOR OF PHOTOGRAPHY ALEJANDRO MARTINEZ EXECUTIVE PRODUCERS GARY BARBER ROGER BIRNBAUM JONATHAN GLICKMAN DOUGLAS E. HANSEN BECKI TRUJILLO ADAM DEL DEO
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OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99
DEVELOPER: CRAVE • PUBLISHER: 505 GAMESTREET • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NONE
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.CRAVEGAMES.COM • PLAYERS: 1-4

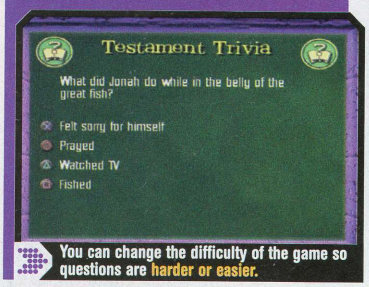
THE BIBLE GAME

Will it lead you into temptation or just be out-and-out evil?

HOLY MOLY

In the Quiz Show, you take turns to select a square on a board, and either answer a question or play a mini-game. Get the Wrath Of God square, though, and you lose all your points from that round. Which hardly seems fair, but who are we to argue?

Playing the AI makes the game even worse than against friends.



You can change the difficulty of the game so questions are harder or easier.

Here's a game that should appease the tabloid press and show them that gamers don't only enjoy shooting cops and decapitating robbers. *The Bible Game* is probably less offensive than your average episode of *EastEnders*, with a quiz show entitled 'Do Unto Others' where you answer questions on the Old Testament and take part in mini-games, all to a Christian rock soundtrack.

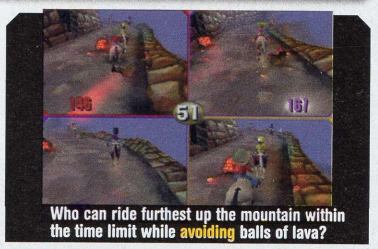
Make no mistake, anyone who isn't Christian clearly isn't going to dig this game in the slightest. Or be able to answer many of the 1500+ Bible-based questions. They might get on better with the mini-games, but on their own these aren't hugely entertaining. Playable for up to four people, they're the usual party game mix of racing, targeting and generally trying to get in everyone else's way, but with a biblical theme. In False Idol you run around booting idols into a fiery pit, in Noah's Ark you predictably race against one another to match up pairs of animals. Some aren't bad and they're infinitely more fun against real people rather than the AI, which seems to score artificially high in some games.

The Jonah and the Whale mini-game is a low point – navigate your whale through hoops...

In the Noah's Ark game, you race everyone else to highlight pairs of animals.

BIBLE BASHED

The quiz show has none of the polish of *Buzz* either. It's obviously not aimed at gamers as such, though, more anyone who enjoys testing their knowledge of the Bible or fancies some good wholesome family entertainment. And at that it succeeds, although unfortunately not as well as it could.



Who can ride furthest up the mountain within the time limit while avoiding balls of lava?

JUDGEMENT

HATH

GRAPHICS 38%
It not the greatest looking game we've seen on PS2.

GAMEPLAY 30%
The game show doesn't flow as well as it could, and can be unfair.

LIFESPAN 35%
There's little to keep you playing, although multi-player isn't too bad.

OVERALL

49%

It could have been a heavenly mix of quiz and party fun, but this is sadly mediocre.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:.....Sunday school
WORSE THAN:..Buzz: The Big Quiz , 58%
WAIT FOR:.....The Bible Game 2?
BEST PRICE:.....£27.99, www.amazon.co.uk

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £34.99 • DEVELOPER: SONNORI • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT • ONLINE: NO
SPECIAL: NONE • OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.UBISOFT.COM • PLAYERS: 1

ASTONISHIA STORY

More mediocrity, in the palm of your hand...

Up against the painfully average *Popolocrois* on PSP (we gave it a 46% kick in the nuts back in *GM*173) this 12 year old RPG doesn't seem so bad – at least initially.

Visually, it works a treat on the PSP's screen, with some beautiful, detailed backdrops, and some highly amusing scenes played out through the game's adorable little sprites. Unfortunately, it doesn't take long for mind-numbing mediocrity to set in.

NOT ASTONISHED

The story is not only very basic, but is overloaded with classic RPG cliches and never really seems to get going. Characters are hardly explored in any depth, and your team chops and changes so much that you never really care about your party. Finally, the battles, so crucial to an RPG, play like a toned down version of *Fire Emblem* – and although paced well enough not to be irritating, are nowhere near strategic enough to give your brain a proper workout. The biggest failing, though, is that the story never really grips you, instead it makes you trudge through fetch and carry quests that are not very exciting at all.

TO BATTLE!

Battles kick off either through visible monsters or random encounters – the actual battles themselves take place on a field, with each character taking turns to move within set perimiters. It's like a mini *Fire Emblem*! Only much less exciting!

The battle system's not bad, it's just that *Fire Emblem* does it all so much better.

It's actually quite funny in places – we particularly like the detail and animation in the game's cut scenes.

The most important folk in the game are easily spotted thanks to their character portraits.

JUDGEMENT

GERAINT

GRAPHICS 52%
Some truly beautiful sprite artwork – not bad for a 12 year old game.

GAMEPLAY 30%
Any RPG fan will have seen and played better a hundred times over.

LIFESPAN 35%
A lengthy adventure, but will you care long enough to see it through?

OVERALL

59%

Sweet sprites and backdrops really aren't enough to hide a pretty bog standard RPG.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:.....Popolocrois , 46%
WORSE THAN:.....Lost Magic, 72%
WAIT FOR:.....Zelda: Phantom Hourglass
BEST PRICE:.....£29.99, www.play.com

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • OTHER FORMATS: XBOX
• DEVELOPER: BLACK OPS • PUBLISHER: UBI SOFT
• ONLINE: YES • PLAYERS: 1-4

BEST BIT!

Watching porky street-ballers take a tumble as nimble opponents pull an ankle-breaker special on them. That'll need traction, fat man...

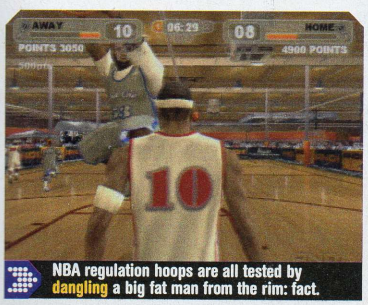
AND 1 STREETBALL

It's got the shiny shoes, but has it got game?

There are two ways to make a good basketball game: go the 'sim' route, with an NBA licence, incomprehensible rules and squeaky floors... or make it 'street', and abandon all the sensible stuff in favour of stupid dribbles and twirly dunks. *AND 1 Streetball* – formerly known as *Street Hoops 2* – is strictly street, with more than a whiff of *T.H.U.G's* prank-obsessed story mode thrown in. But, sadly, it's more rim-shudderer than backboard-shatterer.

It's all about the moves. In *AND 1*, the ultimate diss is the Ankle Breaker, a three-stage dribble-dunk activated by flicking the analogues in sequence and prodding the R1 button. It looks nice, but it's very tricky to do. So is the analogue-based 'stealing' system, dunks, layups, and almost everything else. You'll get used to it eventually, but when scoring alone's so tricky, pulling off ridiculous point-scorers becomes a pointless luxury. And that's something even 'doing' *Jackass*-style hazing rituals with a custom-made 400-pound 'baller can't liven up. Shame.

We'll have a bit of dribble-me-do, an off-the-heezay and a pelvic thrust to finish, please.



NBA regulation hoops are all tested by dangling a big fat man from the rim: fact.

JUDGEMENT — JOEL

GRAPHICS 3/5
The animations aren't too slick and the players seem to hover near the rim.

GAMEPLAY 3/5
A worthy attempt to bring something new, but it mostly only confuses matters.

LIFESPAN 3/5
The story mode offers a decent incentive to play through.

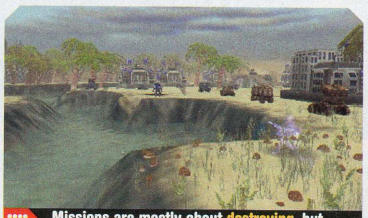
OVERALL

62%

Sitting uneasily between the 'sim' and 'showboater' camps, this is a bit of a mess.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:.. Disney Sports Basketball, 59%
WORSE THAN:..... NBA Street 2, 80%
WAIT FOR:..... Backyard Basketball
BEST PRICE:..... £24.99, amazon.co.uk

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £34.99 • DEVELOPER: SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT • PUBLISHER: UBISOFT • ONLINE: YES • SPECIAL: NONE
• OTHER FORMATS: NONE • PLAYERS: 1-2



Missions are mostly about destroying, but there's some less enjoyable escort stuff.

Each of the game's 30 missions start with a helpful briefing.

FIELD COMMANDER

The PSP gets some turn-based love at last!

The temptation is try and take everything out quickly but start firing and they'll fire back.

Things are looking up for the PSP. At last it's getting the format-exclusive, handheld-aimed games it deserves. It's fair to say that *Field Commander* is the PSP's *Advance Wars* – a simple, addictive, turn-based strategy game, although it's admittedly one without the quirkiness and pretty cartoon graphics.

This is standard strategy stuff, but the small maps and straightforward controls make it easy to jump in and out of. Levels generally just demand you wipe every enemy unit off the map, although there are a few variations – convoy missions, for instance. The 15 army divisions cover ground, air and sea units – everything from a no-frills grunt to slippery stealth tanks, tough transporters and sea-slicing subs.

Factories allow you to create new units as you need them and the money you need to build these units is made from the cities under your control. So not only can you use simple tactics – wading in to obliterate enemy units and blow their HQ sky high – you can also use strategies like flattening their cities to hit them in their wallet.

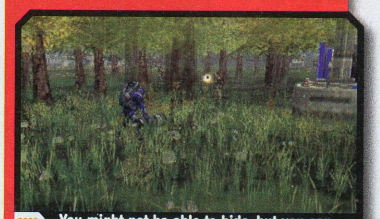
There are also highly enjoyable multi-player and online modes. Basically it's got everything you want from a strategy game on your handheld, and it's massively addictive as well. Which is good news indeed.

BEST BIT!

When a plan works you can make short work of the enemy in spectacular fashion.

HIDE OUT

How much damage you do to another unit, or they do to you, depends partly on the terrain you're on and whether it offers cover or protection. Terrain can also be destroyed.



You might not be able to hide, but you can reduce the amount of damage you take.

As well as blowing the enemy sky-high, you can destroy troublesome bits of the terrain.

JUDGEMENT — KATH

GRAPHICS 4/5
It's not as pretty as it could be. There's a distinct lack of detail.

GAMEPLAY 5/5
Easy to pick up and play and very addictive. Decent strategy, too.

LIFESPAN 5/5
30 missions to complete in single player plus online modes.

OVERALL

82%

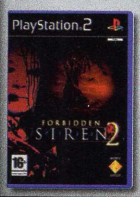
Another original game for the PSP that gets a big thumbs up. Like a realistic *Advance Wars*.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN:..... Metal Gear Acid , 75%
WORSE THAN:..... Advance Wars 2: Black Hole Rising , 94%
WAIT FOR:.... Nothing, if you're after a turn-based strategy game for your PSP

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99
DEVELOPER: SONY • PUBLISHER: SONY • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: SURROUND SOUND
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.FORBIDDENSIREN.COM • PLAYERS: 1

In brief



Highbrow survival horror with *lots* of characters, and a complex storyline.

- Play as over a dozen characters
- Use guns and clubs to defend yourself

Screenshots

Possess zombified enemies with the 'sightjack', so you can see what they see. Spooky.

ZOMBIES!

Shibito are the living dead, who you may recognise from the first game. You can hide from them in darkness.

Yamibito are 'people of the dark', who are sensitive to light. But if you switch on your torch, the Shibito may come for you...

'Formless' enemies are malevolent guffs of red smoke. They can be hurt with torchlight, but are a pain to deal with.

Hand-to-hand combat has improved, but is still messy, so characters with firearms are still more fun to play as.

FORBIDDEN SIREN 2™

The creepiest creeping game ever made.

Oh *Japan*. We love your video games, we really do, but for every amazing idea that makes it through, there's often an inexplicable irritation not too far behind. More specifically, *Siren 2* is very nearly the greatest survival horror game yet made, but every time we start to fall in love with it, the game trips over its own shoelaces and leaves us somewhat embarrassed to be seen with it.

Like the original, it centres on the idea of 'Sightjacking' (seeing through the undead's eyes) and a gruesome plot that pinballs between multiple characters along a detailed timeline, in a story so complicated that it could only be told through a videogame, so as not to cause your brain to phone the police. Unlike the original, there's a good helping of tutorials (essential, really) and the option of subtitles instead of the ill-fitting English language dub that cursed the original, and returns here. It's crucial because the characters have photo-real Japanese faces – so real that they waver between being looking unbelievably striking and, rarely, just a bit daft – and having the original voices involved adds to the effect immeasurably.

ALARM BELLS

But, thanks to some clunky, outdated controls (why not let us use standard twin-stick options, like everyone else?) along with some sticky character movement, it veers between accomplished, hair-straightening terror, and hair-pulling frustration, which can be very annoying. Still, it's got more atmosphere than Jupiter and the fact that it can manage to scare us after all the many survival horror games we've played means that fright fans would be dumb to miss it.

GM

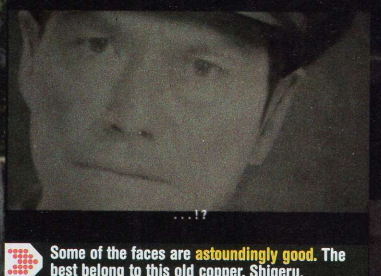
"SIREN 2 IS VERY NEARLY THE GREATEST SURVIVAL HORROR GAME YET MADE"

Other Formats

Or try these:

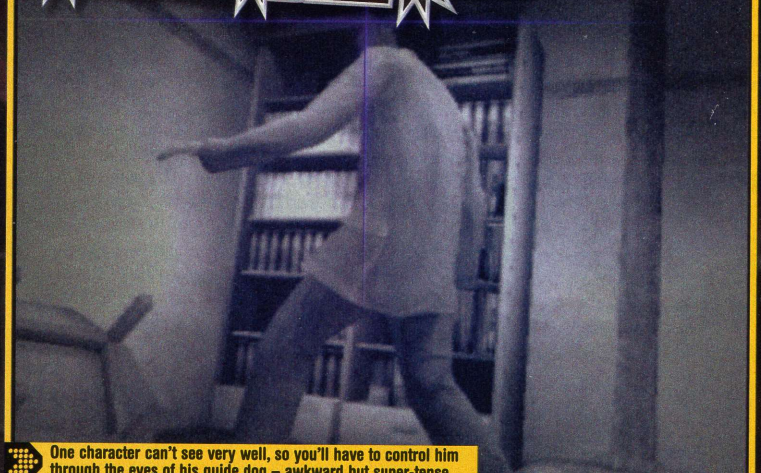
XBOX	The Suffering: Ties That Bind	78%
360	Condemned: Criminal Origins	80%
CUBE	Eternal Darkness	89%

You can play the whole game in first person – it's cramped, but more atmospheric.



Some of the faces are astoundingly good. The best belong to this old copper, Shigeru.

BEST BIT!



One character can't see very well, so you'll have to control him through the eyes of his guide dog – awkward but super-tense.

JUDGEMENT

STEVE

GM LOVES

+ A story you can really get your teeth into
+ Sightjacking. Still truly, truly unsettling
+ Those 'real' faces. When they work, they're terrific...

GM HATES

- ...but when they don't, they look silly
- A control system that has one foot in the past
- Some parts of the environment are ugly and basic

GRAPHICS

Dark but effective, with some rough edges spoiling some sections.

GAMEPLAY

Clunky and sometimes frustrating, patience will reap serious rewards.

LIFESPAN

There's more criss-crossing detail to unravel than in a series of *Lost*.

OVERALL

83%

It's brilliant, clumsy, clever and flawed, but remains a truly effective horror experience.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:..... Cold Fear, 78%
WORSE THAN:..... Silent Hill 2, 86%
WAIT FOR:..... PS3 Alone in the Dark
BEST PRICE:... £24.99, www.amazon.co.uk

JACK 'N' CHILL

Hold down L2 to enter Sightjack mode. Through this, you can see the world through the eyes of the ungodly creatures that are stalking you. You can map up to four of them to the face buttons, to be swapped between as and when you like.

Press L2, and the screen turns to static. Move the left analogue stick to locate a 'mind'...

Then you need to figure out where the hell they're standing, and what route they patrol.

Once you're spotted, the R1 and R2 buttons will let you shortcut to attacking enemies.

OUT: NOW • **FORMAT:** PC • **PRICE:** £34.99 • **DEVELOPER:** STAINLESS STEEL STUDIOS/MIDWAY GAMES
PUBLISHER: MIDWAY • **ONLINE:** YES • **SPECIAL:** LIMITED EDITION AVAILABLE • **OTHER FORMATS:** NONE
WEB: WWW.RISEANDFALLGAME.COM • **PLAYERS:** 1-8

PC

What is it?

An ancient-set RTS which lets you enter the bodies of its leaders for combat.

- Persians, Greeks, Romans and Egyptians.
- It's also got Cleopatra in it. Nice.

Screenshots

In game clip

Alexander? He's great. That's why he became known, throughout all history, as Alexander the Nice.

RISE & FALL
CIVILIZATIONS AT WAR

Why can't they have a nice cup of tea?

It's the message rammed home by any number of dodgy science fiction flicks where a scientist meddles in Things Man Was Not Meant To Know and ends up being eaten: just because you *can* do something doesn't mean that you *should*.

Such is the case with *Rise and Fall*, which has managed to merge the real-time strategy game of command and clicking with the hack-and-slash. It's a simple mechanism – as you play, your hero gains stamina. Activate him and you enter his body and are able to cut enemies into pieces until the bar runs out.

Madness? Actually, no. It works perfectly, as an RTS. At the moments where you need it most you can go in and act as a one-man (or lady, if you're Cleopatra) Biblical intervention. However, you're only in there so much, so it doesn't distract from the main game too much.

ZERO HERO

The problem is that when they'd made this system, someone on the team clearly thought "Hey – we've got direct control... we could do whole levels based around slashing dozens of people". So they do so, ending up with levels that feel like remedial versions of the (excellent) *Spartan: Total Warrior*.

There's only a vague sense of why your character is losing energy, with a complete absence of ways to block attacks, meaning your only defence is to leg it towards the nearest power-up. These almost ruin the campaign mode. After three levels of strategy, it's not exactly likely that there'll be many arcade-fans in the audience, and the strategy heads will be turned right off by this. And rightfully so, as it's clumsy as hell, which is unfortunate.

Which makes it all something of a shame – but *Rise and Fall* will hopefully find its home as a multiplayer game, where its better qualities shine. But, for all its strengths, in the campaign mode it's hardly making history. GM

PERSIANS!

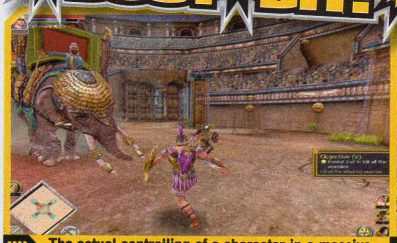
A subtle trait of Rise and Fall is how the units group together into large formations automatically, which is handy.

Persian levys don't even get shirts, and are clearly jolly annoyed about it. You would be too. Think about it.

The Persian's main abilities are in their horse archers and their elites. Each of the four sides has its own strength.

"ENTER HIS BODY AND YOU CAN CUT ENEMIES INTO PIECES"

BEST BIT!



The actual controlling of a character in a massive RTS brawl is excellent.

But the action levels aren't much fun, despite the splendid appearance of elephants.

Other Formats

Or try these:

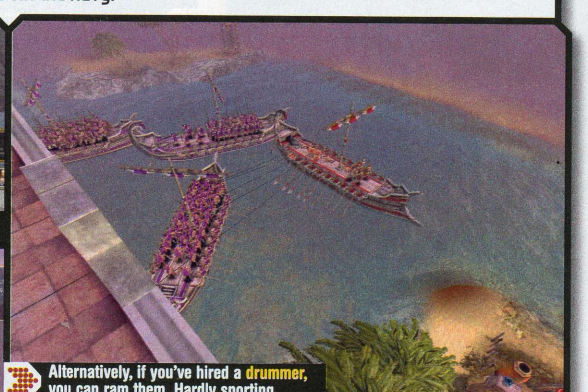
PS2	God of War	94%
CUBE	Battalion Wars	90%
XBOX	Spartan: Total Warrior	80%

I SEE SOME SHIPS

Naval battles have been a somewhat touchy element in the common-or-garden RTS. One of the most impressive achievements of Rise and Fall is, well, having ships which are actually pretty good. Join the navy!

The art is that each boat will go and land and form a landing rank.

Sailors can use grappling hooks to pull ships alongside.



Alternatively, if you've hired a drummer, you can ram them. Hardly sporting.

The problem is that boarding a ship ruins all your soldiers groupings, so you have to re-do them when you get off. Boo.

The ship-based combat also leads to an action mission.

This, inevitably, ends badly. Alexander must swim for it.

JUDGEMENT

HIERON

GM LOVES

- The naval battles
- The hero-mode
- Controlling the masses

GM HATES

- The action levels. Yuck
- The foggy tutorials
- Cleopatra in hot-pants

GRAPHICS 76%

Effective enough, but compared to *Rise of Legends* its not quite up to par.

GAMEPLAY 72%

An average here. Bits are excellent – top of the field. Other bits really aren't.

LIFESPAN 72%

Relatively standard for an RTS. If you fall for the multiplayer, much better.

OVERALL

68%

RTS with an action element which works most of the time.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN:.....Cossacks 2, 79%
WORSE THAN:.....Dawn of War, 90%
WAIT FOR:.....Rise of Legends
BEST PRICE:.....£17.99, Play.com

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PC • PRICE: £19.99
DEVELOPER: VALVE • PUBLISHER: VALVE/EA • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NONE
OTHER FORMATS: NONE • CONTACT: WWW.STEAMPOWERED.COM • PLAYERS: 1

Prologue

What, is that a joke? How about you prise yourself out of the cave, catch up on 15 hours of *Half-Life 2* and head straight into this episodic sequel!

- Continues directly on from *Half-life 2*

Gameplay

Remember those troublesome Roller Mines? Hold one up for Alyx to tinker with and watch the tables turn!

HALF-LIFE 2

EPISODE ONE

Can fresh ideas keep this full of steam?

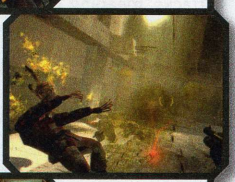
This is familiar territory, populated by familiar people and plagued by the same enemies, but thanks to Valve's ingenuity it's an electrifying return to *Half-Life 2*. *Episode One* shuffles characters from supporting roles to lead roles, weaving a new ride through City 17's heart, catacombs and streets. In many ways, it's the previous story retold, but reversed: you start in the Citadel (which isn't in the best shape since you blew its roof off at the end of *Half-Life 2*) and work your way out towards blessed freedom.

This experience is a doom-laden one, with suffering and dejection at every turn, and a catastrophic cliffhanger. Alyx Vance is therefore a crucially important character, bringing warmth and charisma to the desolation. Because you never see yourself – Freeman – at any point, she's the leading lady, and knows it. She laughs; she cries; she cracks jokes, and she pats you on the back when you do a

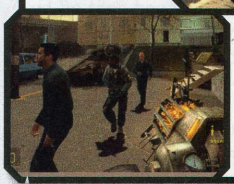
City Strife

It's back in the crumbling Citadel with Alyx to calm its reactor. Good job the Gravity Gun's available for close encounters.

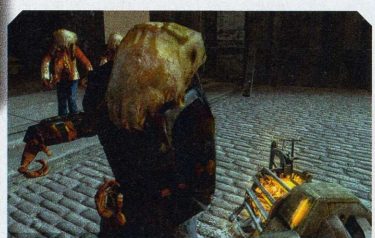
With disaster averted (for now), it's time to escape through the underground. Cue some fierce torch-lit battles with zombies.



The streets are in chaos, and a local enemy-infested hospital is the only way forward. Hectic, to say the least.



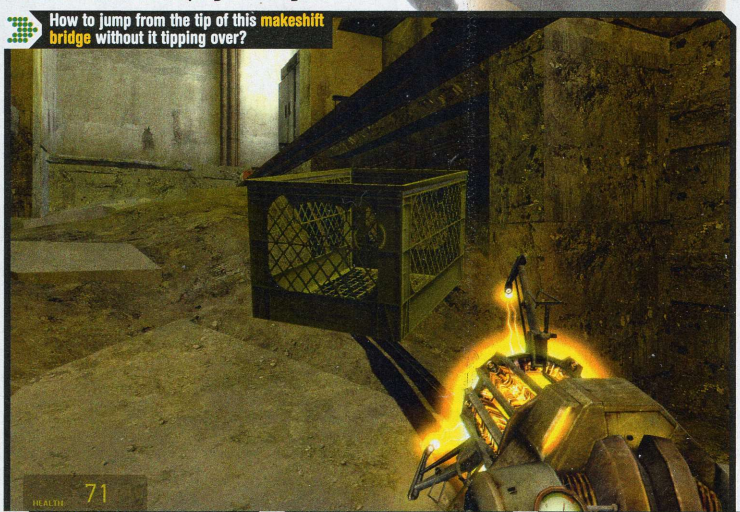
City 17's gonna blow, and you're the citizens' only chance of escape. The train station is your final destination, but it's no cakewalk.



Zombines are *Half-Life 2's* latest adversary, and they're the most dangerous yet.

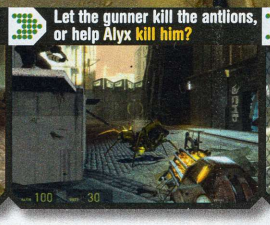
Sandboxing

A great selection of new physics-based puzzles have been ushered in to keep the action fresh and the player feeling smart.

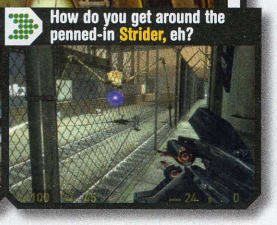


How to jump from the tip of this makeshift bridge without it tipping over?

Antlion burrows provide a constant stream of critters.

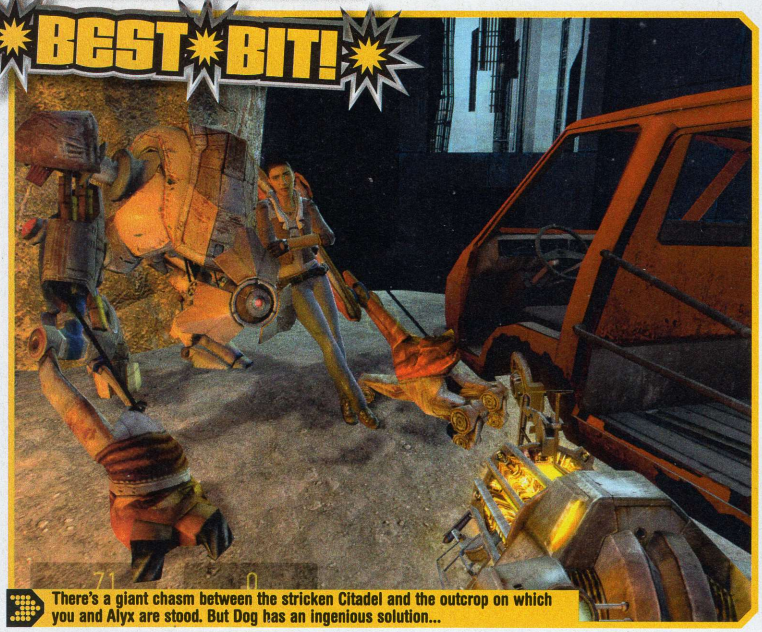


Let the gunner kill the antlions, or help Alyx kill him?



How do you get around the penned-in Strider, eh?

Best Bit!

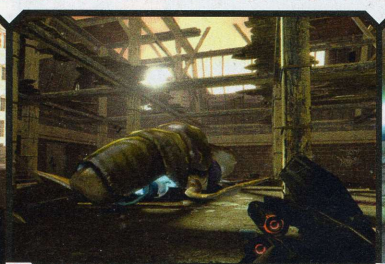


There's a giant chasm between the stricken Citadel and the outcrop on which you and Alyx are stood. But Dog has an ingenious solution...

Old Foes...

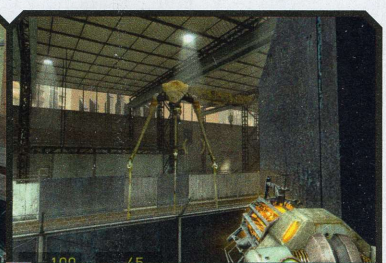
Boss encounters have never been one of *Half-Life 2's* greatest strengths, and the ones in *Episode One* are definitely worse than those of the previous game. Beyond the Zombines, the game has yet to introduce any major new bad guys, and it's cunning level design that gives the returning ones a new lease of life.

Antlion queens make a couple of appearances, and are as headstrong as ever,



A Combine gunship makes the latter part of one level particularly troublesome.

An APC sits in the distance while Combine troops abseil from nearby buildings.



The Strider's penned in, but don't think it can't turn the environment against you.

LOVE LIGHT

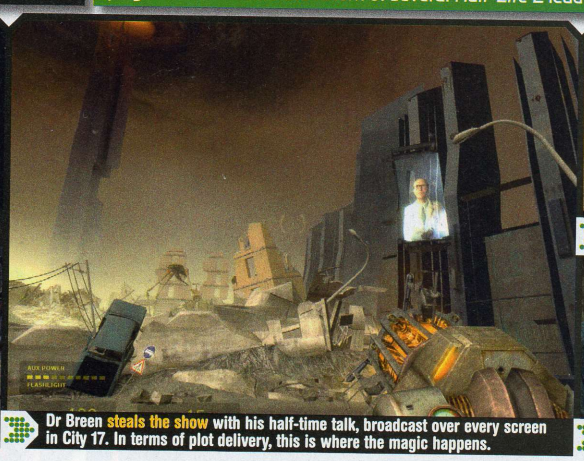
HDR lighting was a showpiece of *The Lost Coast*, and introduced to *Half-Life 2* itself a few patches ago. But its use here is the best the series has seen. Enemies use the blazing sunshine to conceal themselves atop buildings, and characters are given a lovely polish.

OLD FRIENDS

Many of their appearances are mere cameos that help bridge this game and the last, but players will welcome the return of several *Half-Life 2* lead characters.

The G-Man has one line, and it's typically cryptic.

Eli Vance brings a touch of warmth to the first chapter.



Dr Breen steals the show with his half-time talk, broadcast over every screen in City 17. In terms of plot delivery, this is where the magic happens.

Dog gives a powerhouse performance as the game opens.

When the action heats up, Barney steps in to lend a hand.

good job (of killing). That's on top of the AI bread and butter – activating consoles, manning turrets and kicking ass.

LET'S PRETEND

Much of Alyx's actual intelligence is faked. She can take huge amounts of damage before she dies, and therein lies her actual strength as a sister-in-arms. But Valve's greatest trick, and testament to their skill as interactive storytellers, is their mastery of the art of faking. Enemies in *Episode One* are deceptively simple adversaries, but spawned and manoeuvred in ways that make them look like Andy McNab. Tying these encounters together is a slickly threaded story – essentially an action distillation of the previous game's adventure – that visits several newly-invented physics puzzles. They're universally great, and justify the fact that over six hours of play, you're never without the Gravity Gun. Often combined with Alyx's AI assistance, the game's interactions are generally a cut above those that *Half-Life 2* pioneered. The storyline itself is an interesting proposition: a first episode and yet a follow-up as well. Mostly, it's riveting and stirs feverish anticipation of what's to come next year, with the sure-to-be-ace follow-up, *Episode Two*.

But every now and then there's a set-piece or plot development that feels a bit too much like a retread. But even if you're not a fan of the original (madness!) then *Episode One's* rock-bottom price tag still makes it an essential purchase. For everyone else, get ready for the love. GM

Alternatives

Also try:

XBOX *Half-Life 2* on Xbox is a surprisingly good conversion and highly recommended.

Or try these:

PS2	Half-Life	92%
CUBE	Metroid Prime 2: Echoes	92%

ALLY ACTION

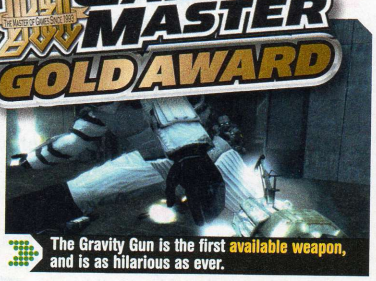
Once Alyx grabs the sniper rifle, she's got your back. Helpful gal, she is.

But if her view's obscured, there's little she can do...

Nothing the Gravity Gun can't fix. Now watch those Zombine noggins roll!

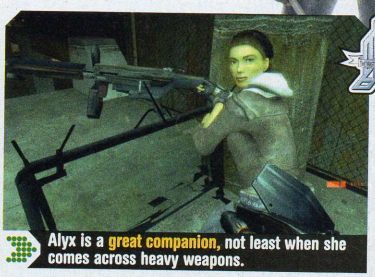
"ALYX VANCE BRINGS WARMTH AND CHARISMA TO THE DESOLATION"

Commentary nodes are available for those insights into Valve's genius.



The Gravity Gun is the first available weapon, and is as hilarious as ever.

GAMES MASTER GOLD AWARD



Alyx is a great companion, not least when she comes across heavy weapons.

JUDGEMENT

DUNCAN

GM LOVES

+ The lovely Alyx Vance
+ The new physics puzzles – great stuff!
+ Zombies plus Combine – Zombines! Marvellous

GM HATES

- The feeling of repetition
- The infrequent stutters
- Waiting for *Episode Two*

GRAPHICS 90%

Source may be getting on, but Valve have given it a gorgeous lick of paint.

GAMEPLAY 92%

Level design is great, Alyx is sensational, the boss battles less so.

LIFESPAN 36hrs

It's only six hours long, but you'll be back for a second run-through.

OVERALL

91%

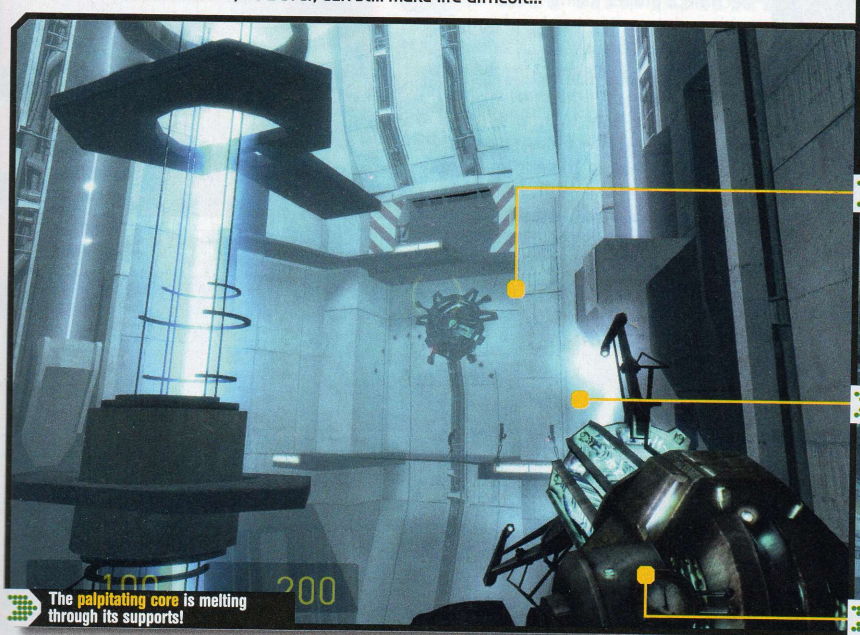
When it comes to both shooting and bargain value episodic content, this is the biz.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Sin Episodes: Emergence, 78%
WORSE THAN: ..... Half-Life 2, 96%
WAIT FOR: ..... Nothing!
BEST PRICE: ..... £11 via Steam

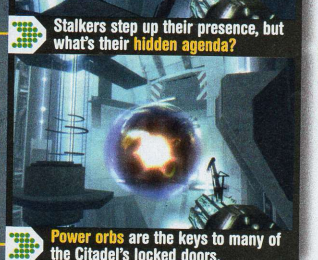
HEART OF BRIGHTNESS

The Citadel core is a surprisingly serene location, especially considering that it's on the verge of meltdown. Its inhabitants, however, can still make life difficult...

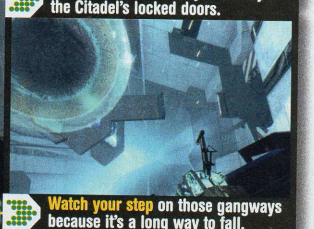


The palpitating core is melting through its supports!

Stalkers step up their presence, but what's their hidden agenda?



Power orbs are the keys to many of the Citadel's locked doors.



Watch your step on those gangways because it's a long way to fall.

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PC • PRICE: £19.99 • DEVELOPER: RITUAL
PUBLISHER: EA • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE
WEBSITE: WWW.SINEPISODES.COM • PLAYERS: 1

PC

Sin succeeds in single-handedly setting back the cause of female gaming by at least a decade. Not that *we're* complaining, mind. Well, apart from Kath, which is fair enough.

sin EPISODES EMERGENCE

Sing when you're sinning.

Remember the 1998 shooter *Sin*? Probably not, because it happened to come out at *exactly* the same time as a certain *Half-Life*. Ouch. Despite boasting cleavage that'd make Lara Croft feel inadequate, megalomaniacal villainess Elexis Sinclaire was banished to whichever cosmetic surgery clinic she sauntered out from...

It seems you can't keep a good set of breasts down, though, so Ms. Sinclaire has returned to once again wreak havoc on the free world.

Cheap and technically superb, Emergence bears a heavy resemblance to *Half-Life 2*, sporting some eerily human AI, inventive deaths (forget headshots – say hello to *brain* shots), and gorgeous outdoor environments.

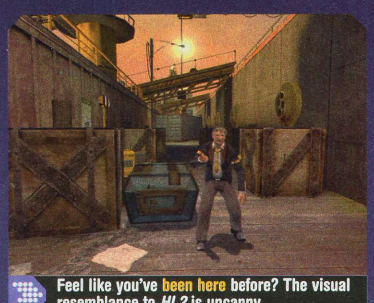
However, *Sin* still feels like it's emerged from a bygone era of shooters, when all a game had to do was let you blow stuff up ad nauseum.

Still, if you're content to wade through a million identikit shootouts to be rewarded with titillating glimpses of Ms. Sinclaire romping around in an itsy witsy bikini, *Emergence* might just be worth a sin... sorry, *spin*. GM

ORIGINAL SIN

Emergence is actually the precursor to a potential nine episodes, and though it's a slightly subdued start it does just enough to suggest subsequent *Sin*-ing will rock.

JUDGEMENT — ROB

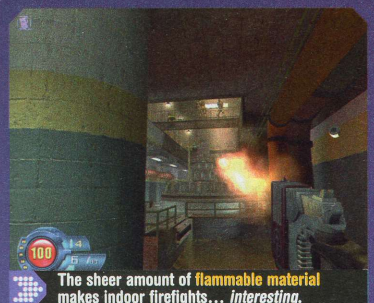


Feel like you've been here before? The visual resemblance to *HL2* is uncanny.

GRAPHICS 3/5
Beautiful environments and some superb models.

GAMEPLAY 2/5
Fun but shallow shooter fare that does nothing we haven't seen before.

LIFESPAN 2/5
Short and not very sweet. Whets the appetite for further episodes though.



The sheer amount of flammable material makes indoor firefights... *interesting*.

OVERALL

78%

Ticks all the boxes without ever once truly capturing the imagination. Cheap, though.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Star Wars: Republic Commando, 71%
WORSE THAN: ..... Half Life 2, 96%
WAIT FOR: ..... Crysis (2007)
BEST PRICE: ..... £14.99 Play.com

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £29.999 • DEVELOPER: SONY ONLINE ENTERTAINMENT • PUBLISHER: SONY • ONLINE: YES
• WEB: HTTP://UNTOLDLEGENDS.STATION.SONY.COM • PLAYERS: 1-4

PSP

Enemies that use projectile weapons are annoying.

The constant combat is fine in small doses, but does begin to grate after a while.

UNTOLD LEGENDS THE WARRIOR'S CODE

Untold? Strangely familiar, more like...

Attack of Opportunity!
It's a shame the top-down camera obscures so much detail, as the game looks lovely.

If repeatedly stabbing ⊗ to skewer inexhaustible legions of fantasy beasties is your idea of a good time, then *Warrior's Code* is going to tickle your fun-gland with a feather duster until you giggle-weep.

If it isn't, well, you'll simply get a sprained thumb without much to show for it. Which is a shame, as this is a definite step up from its predecessor, *Brotherhood of the Blade*.

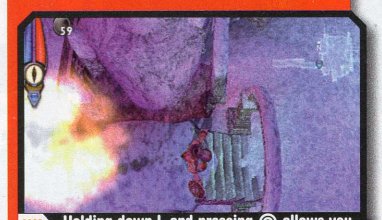
SWORD-BORED

It's still a straight-ahead hack-and-slasher, but the little improvements here and there certainly add something. The ability to turn into a beast, although redundant by the time you've got enough experience to become a proper killing machine, adds an interesting twist early on. The wide range of attacks, skills and magic is similarly impressive, and the ability to play the game co-operatively, either online or wirelessly, is an option that was sorely lacking in the first game.

Nevertheless, at the end of the day this is still repetitive stuff. If that's your bag, then those train journeys will fly by; if it's not, then, along with the overworked thumb, you'll be left with the nagging feeling that more could have been done to make *Warrior's Code* a bit more interesting. GM

FIGHT RIGHT

There's a huge variety of attacks, skills and magic on offer here...



Holding down L and pressing ◎ allows you to toggle between melee and ranged attacks.

Hold down L and press △ to transform into a slavering fantasy beast-thing.

JUDGEMENT — JES

GRAPHICS 3/5
A genuinely pretty game, although the overhead camera obscures the detail.

GAMEPLAY 3/5
Standard hack-and-slash with some nice magic and varied attack skills.

LIFESPAN 3/5
It's a hefty slog, with online multiplayer, but it does pall quickly.

OVERALL

77%

An admirably action-packed RPG, but one that gets repetitive fairly quickly.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Untold Legends: Brotherhood of the Blade, 76%
WORSE THAN: ..... Breath of Fire 3, 83%
WAIT FOR: ..... Crisis Core: Final Fantasy 7
BEST PRICE: ..... £29.99, www.amazon.co.uk

BEST BIT!

You're a levelled-up killing machine, destroying everything that gets in your way!

OUT: NOW **FORMAT:** PS2 **PRICE:** £34.99 **DEVELOPER:** SUPERSONIC SOFTWARE
PUBLISHER: CODEMASTERS **ONLINE:** NO **SPECIAL:** TWO PLAYERS ON ONE PAD
OTHER FORMATS: DS, PSP, PC **WEB:** NO **PLAYERS:** 1-8

What is it?

The fourth installment of the evergreen racing game.

- 50 race tracks
- 25 car classes with 750 vehicles
- 25 power ups

A race around the beach gets nasty as everyone heads for the closing straight – past a nasty case of crabs...

PS2 PC PSP DS

Micro Machines V4

Size doesn't matter, but speed does!

They've been whizzing about since the 1980s, but the retro sparkle of *Micro Machines* is starting to wear off. It's difficult to see why this is: they've still got the tiny cars, the clever tug-of-war racing dynamic, the ingenious courses made up of everyday objects and the weapons. But it just doesn't work, and it doesn't take long before you realise why...

It's the *feel* of *Micro Machines* that kills the racing buzz. Take the ever-popular hammer weapon – while it's fun to watch, it just doesn't smash other cars with the satisfying thwunk you'd expect. In fact, none of the weapons do enough damage – unlike the superior *Mashed*, where a direct hit'll take a competitor out of the race, it's barely even worth worrying about picking up weapons or getting shot in *Micro Machines*, because with such tight margins of error, the effort'll almost certainly knock you out of the race more often than it does you any good.

When a tight race goes into special rules overtime, and you fight over every point like a starving tiger.

Mini guns

Machine guns are basically hopeless, because they don't do much damage and you have to be losing to use them.

Dice need to be thrown backwards, but take ages to activate. They are hopeless.

The shocker homes in, but can't destroy a car even with a direct hit. It is also hopeless.

And the hammer is fun, and last longer than any other weapon. But it's still hopeless.

Watch the red bar, or you'll die... and need to reload the level despite it being tiny.

Formula fun?

Even in races, the cornering's painful, and the course design doesn't quite have the sparkle or imagination seen in earlier games. Other dodgy design decisions knock the fun and skill out of races: compare, say, the bit where you all leap into a kitchen draw – immediately neutralising anyone's lead, and starting you off on an even footing – to the 'raft' bit in *Mashed*, where you all tussle across a floating platform en route to the next bit of course. One's inspired, the other's simply going through the motions. *Micro Machines* might still have the look, the levels and the cutesy appeal, but there's very little under the hood. And that, readers, is a crying shame. GM

The equaliser 'equals up' everyone's energy bar, and is completely pointless.

"THE COURSE DESIGN DOESN'T HAVE SPARKLE OR IMAGINATION"

Other Formats
Or try these:

PS2	Mini Desktop Racing	55%
HBOX	Mashed	85%
PSP	Juiced Eliminator	80%

Judgement

GM Loves
+ Those tightly-fought races where every corner's a nail-biter
+ Pasting opponents with the giant hammer power-up

GM Hates
- The train-track level – it's so unfair
- Checkpoint races - they're not really what *MM*'s supposed to be about

Graphics
Confusing design and a lack of visual polish upset matters.

Gameplay
A few inspired courses would be better than dozens of right-angled ones.

Lifespan
Stacks to unlock, but it's frustrating rather than addictive.

Overall
65%
Tiny-car heaven can't make up for a game that feels a bit wimpy next to bigger racers.

Should you buy it?
BETTER THAN: ..... Street Riders, 48%
WORSE THAN: ..... Mashed, 85%
WAIT FOR: Need For Speed Underground 2
BEST PRICE: ..... £29.99, amazon.co.uk

Share play

Ever since *Micro Machines* on the Game Boy, the series has included one touch of genius – shared pad mode. Basically, because the controls are so simple, one person can use the D-Pad while his mate uses the symbol buttons.

In comparison to earlier editions, *MM* seems a bit short on those sneaky, corner-cutting shortcuts that are so risky but satisfying to pull off.

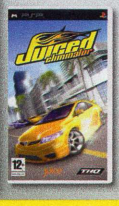
Even the set-piece bits are irritating – like the leap-into-a-fan bit that immediately negates whatever lead you've built up. Why?

REVIEW

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £34.99 • DEVELOPER: JUICE GAMES
PUBLISHER: THQ • ONLINE: CREW RACES, PINK SLIP RACING, ELIMINATOR
OTHER FORMATS: PS2, XBOX, PC • CONTACT: WWW.THQ.CO.UK • PLAYERS: 1-6

PS2 XBOX PC

What's new?



Juiced revs over to the PSP garage for some serious handheld pimping.

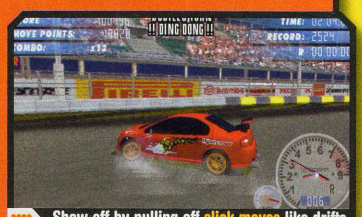
- Eight new characters and crews
- Two new locations
- Nine new cars with over 100 new body kit components

Juicy graphics

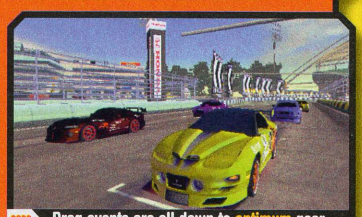
This is Nina, a slightly scary Teri Hatcher-alike from the Total Power Junkies crew. Race her and nick all her cash!

TYPE R

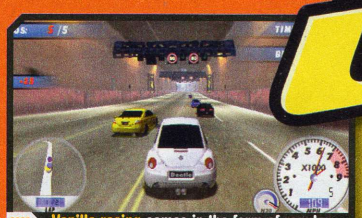
Juiced packs in all your staple racing types. Track it out!



Show off by pulling off slick moves like drifts and donuts.



Drag events are all down to optimum gear shifting and meaty HP.



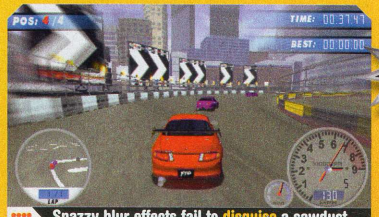
Vanilla racing comes in the form of regular circuits and reversed circuits...

Other formats

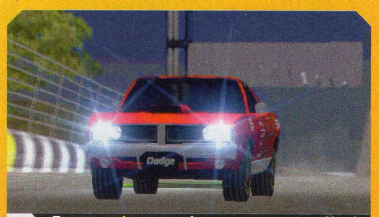
Or try these:

PS2	Juiced!	80%
CUBE	Street Racing Syndicate	61%
XBOX	Need for Speed: Most Wanted	86%

Nitrous is best used to gain rapid acceleration when you fudge a corner.

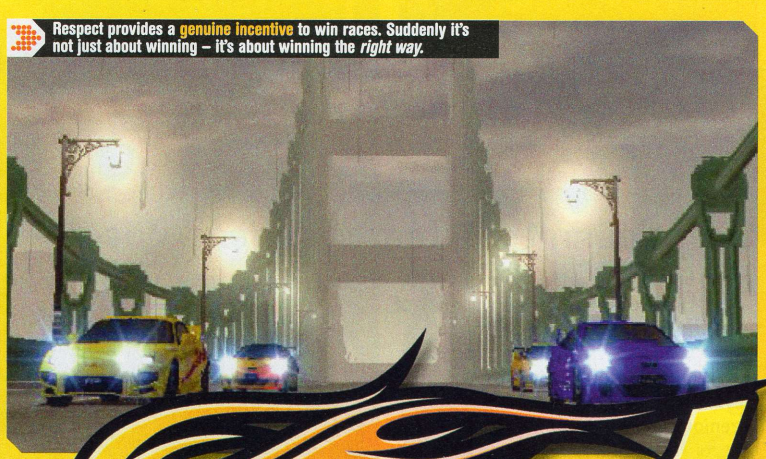


Snazzy blur effects fail to disguise a sawdust-filled graphics engine.



Even muscle cars make an appearance – *Need For Speed* beware!

Respect provides a genuine incentive to win races. Suddenly it's not just about winning – it's about winning the *right way*.



Juiced eliminator

Can this souped-up PSP racer eliminate the competition?

Despite being perceived by some as a poor man's *Need For Speed*, here at GM we're pretty, well, *juiced* at the thought of another *Juiced*. Thing is, with the PSP not exactly short-changed in the racing department, is there any room left in the garage for THQ's young pretender to squeeze in?

By cunningly mixing the simulation aspects (chiefly damage and markedly more realistic handling) with street-style bling and modding, *Juiced* offers a very well-rounded and enjoyable package. Factor in a wealth of engine/cosmetic tweaks and the whole shebang is a very attractive proposition indeed.

OUT OF JUICE

Alas, other innovations – like the initially intriguing concept of respect – don't fare quite as well. It's only natural that in the heat of a race you're likely to bash into rivals (and vice versa), yet you'll suffer in the popularity stakes for any transgressions. Still, at least it's easy to keep track of alliances and feuds nowadays, thanks to the rejiggled respect-o-meter.

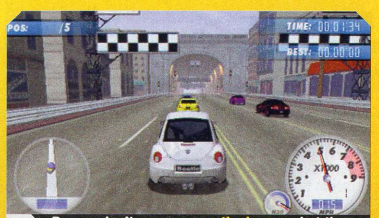
And that's not the only bodywork that's seen some renovations since PS2 *Juiced*. A refined career mode calendar (hallelujah!), new crews, loads more tracks and garagefuls of new rides to master and pimp to your heart's desire mean that *Juiced* is far more than a run-of-the-mill PSP port.

Even better, the rather irritating betting mechanic has also been overhauled. Now, you don't have to pay race fees anymore, no longer forsake privileges and can instantly retry events after you've ballsed them up.

But – and there is a but – *Juiced* doesn't quite make the same impact out on the track. Sadly, it's just not as fluid, good-looking or satisfying an arcadey racing experience as something like *Ridge Racers*. Dig deep, though, and in terms of pure longevity and reward, *Juiced Eliminator* well and truly runs the opposition right off the road. GM

"JUICED ELIMINATOR WELL AND TRULY RUNS THE OPPOSITION RIGHT OFF THE ROAD"

There's nothing quite like taking an old banger and furnishing it with thousands of dollars worth of bling, before beating all-comers...



Prangs don't cause cosmetic damage, but they will cause all sorts of handling issues...

JUDGEMENT

ROB

GM LOVES

- Pimping our yellow Beetle
- A calendar that finally makes sense
- More tracks than *Trackmania!*

GM HATES

- Wretched sensation of speed
- Uninspired events
- *Still* too hard!

GRAPHICS

Rides look shiny-nice, but blur effects fail to convey a true sensation of speed.

GAMEPLAY

Lacks *Ridge Racers*' 'whoa' factor, but we like the *NFSU*-meets-*GT* handling.

LIFESPAN

Like a Volvo – built to last. Sterling multiplayer enhances the experience.

OVERALL

80%

The engine could do with some extra juice, but this is still a vastly rewarding racer.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?

BETTER THAN: ..... Street Riders, 48%
WORSE THAN: ..... Ridge Racers, 90%
WAIT FOR: ..... Pursuit Force 2 (2007)
BEST PRICE: ..... £25.99, ChoicesUK

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £34.99
• DEVELOPER: CAPCOM • PUBLISHER: CAPCOM • ONLINE: NO • SPECIAL: NO
• OTHER FORMATS: PS2, XBOX (GAMES MAY VARY) • CONTACT: WWW.CAPCOM-EUROPE.COM • PLAYERS: 1-2

INFECTED™

An infection that you'll actually want to catch?

Think you're safe? Watch the zombies go and triple in size.

There's not really a shortage of games that let you splatter killer zombies all over the shop. *Infected*, though, shakes up that genre by adding a bit of *State Of Emergency*-style mayhem, combo kills and timed levels.

Playing as rookie cop Officer Stevens, your job is to kill every single infected on each level while avoiding the retaliating zombies' pus attacks and, as they get smarter, rocket launcher fire. On first impressions, this is pretty simple stuff – a bit of strafing and a lot of shooting and that's about it. Start playing each of the 35 sub-three minute levels for gold medals, though, and things get more challenging, not to mention a bit more interesting, when objectives start to involve rescuing normal civilians as well as just killing the infected.

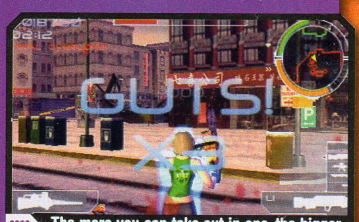
BRAAAIIINS!

Plenty of unlockable and upgradeable weapons, as well as flying body parts, mean this is entertaining stuff while it lasts. The controls aren't responsive enough for a third-person shooter to make it *that* satisfying, though – there's no lining up head shots, just a lot of repetitive fire-button action. Multi-player prolongs the blood fest a bit longer with deathmatches that, if won, spread your virus to your opponent's PSP then hopefully lots of other PSPs. A neat addition, but no substitute for meatier gameplay. GM

COMBO FUN

Zombies can't be killed with sheer firepower alone – instead you need to wear down their determination with a barrage of bullets then finish them off with your special zombie-mutating firearm. If you can get a group of zombies all glowing red then shooting this gun will take them all out in one big, bloody, limb-flying combo kill.

When the zombies get a Ready Brek glow they're ready to be taken out.



The more you can take out in one, the bigger your combo and the more guts spilt.

BEST BIT!

If you fancy yourself as a chainsaw-welding loon, you'll enjoy levels where you can slice and dice.

You can paint the town (and the screen) red with it. It's like a zombie holocaust.

JUDGEMENT

KATH

GRAPHICS 38%
It ain't pretty but it does have a nice *Serious Sam*-esque visual style.

GAMEPLAY 52%
The basics are a lot of fun and beating times is challenging. Little depth, though.

LIFESPAN 35%
You can whip through the 35 single player missions in a day.

OVERALL

68%

For mindless shooting with a splattering of comedy, Infected does the job.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: Medievil Resurrection 66%
WORSE THAN: .. GTA: Liberty City Stories, 90%
WAIT FOR: ..... Showdown PSP (Autumn)
BEST PRICE: .... £24.99 www.amazon.co.uk

• OUT: NOW • FORMAT: DS • PRICE: £29.99 • DEVELOPER: NINTENDO • PUBLISHER: NINTENDO • ONLINE: NO
• OTHER FORMATS: NONE • WEB: WWW.NINTENDOGS.COM • PLAYERS: 1

NINTENDOGS DALMATION & FRIENDS

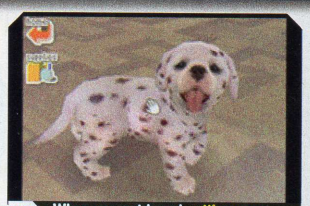
The version that Cruella De Ville would love...

It's been a while since we last swung our *Nintendogs* puppy around by his teeth with a pull rope, or watched with a sense of pride as he held the beg position for 10 seconds in the Masterclass obedience trial. So a new version of *Nintendogs* is a welcome excuse to spend another few months throwing discs in the park and saying 'aaaw' a lot.

Nintendogs: Dalmation & Friends isn't a remake or update, just another version to add to the three different breeds already available. Obviously it stars some lovely spotty Dalmation puppies (although they're not that spotty because Dalmations develop their spots as they get older, don't you know) and also five other breeds of dog already found in other versions, like Yorkshire Terriers and Golden Retrievers.

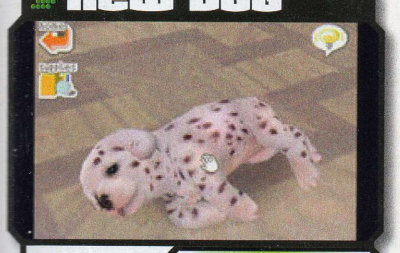
Dalmation & Friends, then, might not be of that much interest to anyone who's already been through the phenomenon of *Nintendogs* and come out the other side understanding the importance of scooping the poop that little bit better. Especially since the Dalmation pup is already in the other versions as an unlockable secret.

But for newcomers, it means even more choice in a game that's as essential as *Metroid* and *Mario*, even if just because it's cute puppy-based genius that has you training your pups, entering them in competitions, and cooing at their cuteness. Lovely. GM



When you get bored petting your puppy, you can enter him in compos.

NEW DOG



To teach your puppy tricks, you simply get him to do one, then tap the recorder icon to record yourself saying the command.

BEST BIT!

Connect up with other *Nintendogs* owners and your puppies will meet and play together. You can give one another presents as well.

JUDGEMENT

KATH

GRAPHICS 80%
The animations of the puppies have to been seen to be believed.

GAMEPLAY 78%
Gameplay is initially compelling but things get samey.

LIFESPAN 30%
Unlike your local animal shelter, you won't be putting it down after a week.

OVERALL

88%

If you've yet to play *Nintendogs*, this new version is another ace reason to get involved.

SHOULD YOU BUY IT?
BETTER THAN: ..... Dogz (GBA), 38%
WORSE THAN: ..... Animal Crossing: Wild World, 92%
WAIT FOR: ..... Nintendogs on Wii
BEST PRICE: ... £24.99, www.amazon.co.uk

REVIEWS ROUND UP

PS2 XBOX GAMECUBE PC DS

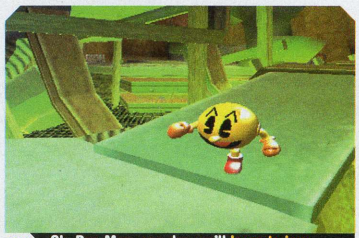
OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PSP • PRICE: £34.99
DEVELOPER: NAMCO • PUBLISHER: EA
ONLINE: WIFI MULTI-PLAYER • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, XB, GC, PC, DS • WEB: PACMANWORLD3.NAMCO.COM • PLAYERS: 1-4

PAC-MAN WORLD 3

The end of Pac's world as we know it?

While being presented with his 25th birthday cake by his delightful wife, Pac-Man gets zapped into a world full of monsters and machinery and has to find a way back out, disposing all who stand in his way with either his fists or the power of his butt-bounce attack, while gobbling up all the pills and fruit he comes across.

This time around, you'll be able to take control of the ghosts and use them to reach places that Pac-Man can't. Sadly, that's as far as the originality goes. The little yellow fella even has a dash attack that just reinforces the feeling that this is a failed attempt to create a slow-placed *Sonic*-type title. GM



Oh, Pac-Man, one day we'll learn to love you, don't you worry.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 59%

It's just not up to the pace of the competition. Pac-Man, pack your bags.

REVIEWER: TOM SMITH

PS2 XBOX GAMECUBE PC DS

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PC • PRICE: £19.99
DEVELOPER: LIONHEAD STUDIOS • PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
ONLINE: MOVIE UPLOAD • OTHER FORMATS: NONE
WEB: WWW.THEMOVIESGAME.COM • PLAYERS: 1

THE MOVIES: STUNTS & EFFECTS

Direct the next *Titanic*... or *Waterworld!*

The Movies let you create your own movies like no game ever has before, and this expansion pack is exactly what wannabee Jerry Bruckheimers have been waiting for. It adds stuntmen to the list of employees you can take on, for spectacular fights and falls. You also get bigger and better explosions and special effects as well as new sets, scenes and costumes. Expect the official website to be deluged with homages to *Independence Day* within days of its release. GM

Now you can create that blockbuster you always wanted to. Coo!

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 85%

Makes *The Movies* even bigger and better. Great stuff.

REVIEWER: KATH BRICE

PS2

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: PS2 • PRICE: £29.99
DEVELOPER: ATLUS • PUBLISHER: GHOSTLIGHT
ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NO
WEB: WWW.DIGITALDEVILSAGA.CO.UK • PLAYERS: 1

SHIN MEGAMI TENSEI

A refreshing kick to the *Shins*. See what we did there?

The slick 'n' stylish *Shin* series returns with this entry, subtitled *Digitial Devil Saga*. Imagine *Mad Max* and *Final Fantasy's* love child – that's exactly what *Digital Devil Saga* reminds us of, even visually. Futuristic yet apocalyptic.

If you caught the previous game, don't expect much of a change. The battle system's been revamped slightly, losing monster fusion and adopting an improved ability system that lets you customise each character's attacks how you see fit. Worth a look. GM

Lots of monsters fight it out in a turn-based style. Welcome!

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 73%

Strong RPG that's a little bit different to usual fare.

REVIEWER: TOM SMITH

PS2 XBOX GAMECUBE GAME BOY ADVANCE PSP

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: DS • PRICE: £29.99
DEVELOPER: SEGA • PUBLISHER: SEGA
ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, XB, GC, PSP, GBA
WEB: WWW.SEGA-EUROPE.COM • PLAYERS: 1-8

PUYO POP FEVER

Cute, squishy puzzling at its finest...

The DS has more than proved itself as a console more suited to puzzle games than most with the addictive likes of *Zoo Keeper, Meteos* and *Pokemon Link*.

But does *Puyo Pop* benefit from being on Nintendo's newest handheld? Well, yes and no. The touch screen controls don't make the game any easier to play. The biggest plus point of portable *Puyo Pop* is the option to play with up to eight players wirelessly via only one copy of the game, and in multi-player the game really shines. GM

Puyo Pop is best when played against friends. Otherwise, it's no Tetris.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 70%

Colourful and cute but there's a strategic puzzler underneath.

REVIEWER: KATH BRICE

DS XBOX

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: DS • PRICE: £30
DEVELOPER: ACTIVISION • PUBLISHER: ACTIVISION
ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: PS2, XB
WEB: WWW.X-MENGAME.COM • PLAYERS: 1

X-MEN: THE OFFICIAL GAME

Worse than a cuddle from Lady Deathstrike...

Here's the good news: you can 'be' Magneto. Here's the bad news: he's almost exactly the same as everyone else.

Forget spoon-bending, ice-bridges, berserk claw attacks and bamf-ing around, because everybody in DS *X-Men* attacks in exactly the same way – you coax them around the screen with the D-pad, prod enemies with the stylus, then wait for someone to die. The graphics wouldn't exactly wow you on the GBA, so the sole redeeming feature of this is that it fills in the gaps between the two films and is cheaper than the equally dire PS2 version. Which, in itself, isn't really much of a recommendation. You'd be best off giving this one a miss. GM

Sadly, all the characters in the game are pretty much the same. A shame.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 31%

We've found free games on the internet better than this.

REVIEWER: JOEL SNAPE

DS PS2 XBOX

OUT: NOW • FORMAT: DS • PRICE: £24.99
DEVELOPER: ATLUS • PUBLISHER: RISING STAR
ONLINE: NO • OTHER FORMATS: NONE
WEB: WWW.ATLUS.COM • PLAYERS: 1-4

SBK: SNOWBOARD KIDS

Kiddy capers on the slopes...

Have you ever lain awake at night wondering what could have been if Mario had been a kid and his kart had been a snowboard?

Well, for the one person who might have, *Snowboard Kids* is the answer. A fairly pretty and competent snowboarding game on the surface, underneath lies gameplay that owes a lot to *Mario Kart*. As you slide down the slopes, tapping the screen to pick up speed and using the buttons to pull off tricks, you can collect power ups to use against your opponents.

Some of these are very neat. Get hit by a snowball and you have to blow in the DS microphone to clear your view. It's all good fun but unfortunately just a bit too short and simplistic, meaning this won't last you terribly long. GM

Sadly, this isn't anywhere near as good as the cutesy N64 original.

JUDGEMENT

OVERALL 68%

A fun and addictive snowboarding game let down by its simplicity.

REVIEWER: KATH BRICE

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Area 51
ATV Off-Road Fury 2
ATV Off-Road Fury 3
ATV Quad Racing 2
Auto Modellista

B = 0 2
Backyard Basketball
Backyard Wrestling
Backyard Wrestling 2
Bad Boys 2
Baldur's Gate: D.Alliance 2
Baldur's Gate: Drk.Alliance
Bard's Tale
Bass Strike
Batman Begins
Batman Vengeance
Battlefield 2: Mod. Combat
Beatdown: F. of Vengeance
Beyond Good and Evil
Big Mutha Truckers
Bionicle
Black
Blazing Angels: Sq.of WW2
BloodRayne 2
Breath of Fire 4
Brian Lara Int. Cricket '05
Broken Sword
Broken Sword 3: S. Dragon
Brothers in Arms
Brothers in Arms: E.I.B.
Buffy 2: Chaos Bleeds
Bulletproof (50 Cent)
Burnout Revenge

C = 0 3
Call of Duty 2
Call of Duty 2 Big Red One
Call of Duty: Finest Hour
Championship Manager '02
Chicken Little*
Chronicles of Narnia
Colosseum: Rd. to Freedom
Com. & Conq.: Red Alert
Com. & Conq.: Tib. Sun
Conflict: Global Storm
Conflict: Vietnam
Crash B'coot: Wr. of Cortex
CSI: Dark Motives

D = 0 4
Da Vinci Code
Delta Force: B. Hawk Down
Destroy All Humans
Devil May Cry
Devil May Cry 3
Digimon World
Doom III
Dragon Ball Z: Budokai T.
Dragon Quest VIII: JOTCK
DRIV3R
Driver: Parallel Lines
Duel Masters
Dynasty Warriors 4
Dynasty Warriors 4: X. Leg.
Dynasty Warriors 5
Dynasty Warriors 5 Xtr.Leg.

E = 0 5
Elder Scrolls: Morrowind
Empires: Dawn of M.World
Enter the Matrix
Everybody's Golf

F = 0 6
Fable
Far Cry Instincts: Predator
Far Cry: Instincts
Far Cry: Instincts T.N.Chap.
FIFA 2006
FIFA Football 2005
FIFA Street 2
FIFA World Cup 2006
Fight Night Round 2
Fight Night Round 3
Final Fantasy X-2
Football Manager H'held

G = 0 7
Getaway 2: Black Monday
Ghost Recon 2
Ghost Recon: Adv. Warf.
God of War
Godfather
Gran Turismo 4
Grand Theft Auto 3
Grand Theft Auto: L.C.S.
Grand Theft Auto: San A.
Grand Theft Auto: Vice City
Guitar Hero
Gun

H = 0 8
H.Potter & Pris. of Azkaban
Half Life 2
Harry Potter: Goblet of Fire
Haunting Ground
Headhunter: Redemption
Hitman 2: Silent Assassin
Hitman 3: Contracts
Hogs of War

I = 0 9
I-Ninja
Indiana Jones: Emp. Tomb

J = 1 0
Jak 2: Renegade
James Bond 007: Nightfire
James Bond: Agent U. Fire
James Bond: E. or Nothing
Jedi Power Battles
Juiced
Jurassic Park: Op. Genesis

K = 1 1
Killzone
King Kong (Peter Jackson's)
Kingdom Hearts
Kingdom Und. Fire: Heroes

L = 1 2
L.A. Rush
Lara Croft T.Raider Legend
Leg. of Zelda: Wind Waker
Lego Star Wars
LMA Manager 2003
LMA Manager 2005
LMA Pro. Manager 2005
Lord of the Rings: 3rd Age*

M = 1 3
Mafia
Marc Ecko's Getting Up
Matrix: Path of Neo
Max Payne 2
Medal of Honor Frontline
Medal of Honor: Euro. Ass.
Medieval: Total War
Mega Man Battle Net. 5
Megaman Zero
Mercenaries: Pof Destruct.
Metal Gear Solid 3 S.Eater
Midnight Club 3: DE Remix
Midnight Club 3: DUB Ed.
Mission Impossible: Op. S.
Morrowind
Mortal Kombat: Deadly All.
Mortal Kombat: Deception
Mortal Kombat: Shaolin M.

N = 1 4
Need 4 Speed: M.W.5-1-0
Need for Speed M.Want.
Need for Speed: H. Stake
Need for Speed: Undergr.
Need for Speed: Undergr.2
Ninja Gaiden
Nintendogs

P = 1 6
Perfect Dark Zero
Peter Jackson's King Kong
Pokemon Crystal
Pokemon Emerald
Pokemon Fire Red
Pokemon Gold
Pokemon Leaf Green
Pokemon Ruby
Pokemon Sapphire
Pokemon Silver
Pokemon Yellow
Predator: Concrete Jungle
Primal
Prince of Persia: 2 Thrones
Prince of Persia: W.Within
Pro Evolution Soccer 5
Project Zero
Punisher

Q = 1 7
Quake IV

R = 1 8
Red Dead Revolver
Res. Evil: Code Veronica X
Res. Evil: Outbreak File #2
Resident Evil 3: Nemesis
Resident Evil 4
Resident Evil: Outbreak
Rocky
Rumble Roses XX
Run Like Hell

S = 1 9
Scooby Doo: 100 Frights
Scooby Doo: Mys. Mayhem
Shadow of Rome
Shadow of the Colossus
Silent Hill 2
Silent Hill 4: The Room
Simpsons: Hit & Run
Simpsons: Road Rage
Sims
Sims 2
Sims Livin' It Up
Smackdown vs Raw 2006
SOCOM 3: US Navy Seals
SOCOM: US Navy Seals
Sonic Advance 3
Sonic Heroes
Sonic Mega Collection Plus
Spartan: Total Warrior
Spider-Man: The Movie 2
Splinter Cell
Splinter Cell 2: Pandora T.
Spyro: A Hero's Tail
Spyro: Enter the Dragonfly
Star Trek: Elite Force
Star Wars Episode III
Star Wars: Battlefront
Star Wars: Battlefront 2
Star Wars: KOTOR2 Sith L.
Stuntman
Suffering: Ties That Bind

T = 2 0
Tekken 5
Tekken Tag Tournament
The Da Vinci Code
The Elder Scrolls: Oblivion
The Godfather
The Incr. Hulk: Ult. Destr.
The Matrix: Path of Neo
The Outfit
The Sims 2
Tiger Woods 2005
Tiger Woods 2006
TimeSplitters F.P.
TOCA Race Driver 3
Tom Clancy's GR: Adv.War.
Tomb Raider 5: Chronicles
Tomb Raider: Angel of Drk.
Tomb Raider: Legend
Tony Hawk's Pro Skater 2
Tony Hawk's: Amer.Waste.
Total Overdose
True Crime: NYC
Twenty-Four: The Game

U = 2 1
Ultimate Spider-Man
Urban Reign
Urbz: Sims in the City

W = 2 3
WWE Sm'kdown v Raw '06
WWE Wrestlemania 21

X = 2 4
X-Files: Resist or Serve
X-Men Legends 2ROA
X-Men: Official Game

Y = 2 5
Yu Yu Hakusho Dark Tourn.
Yu-Gi-Oh! Duel. of Roses
Yu-Gi-Oh! Dung.Dice Mns.
Yu-Gi-Oh! Forbidden Mem.
Yu-Gi-Oh! R. of Destruction
Yu-Gi-Oh! Sacred Cards
Yu-Gi-Oh!: Cap.Mon.Col.

Z = 2 6
Zelda: Master Quest
Zoo Tycoon
Zoo Tycoon: Dinosaur Digs

0-9 = 2 7
24: The Game

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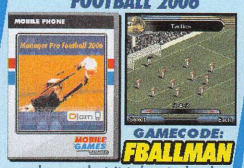
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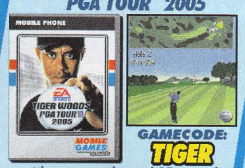
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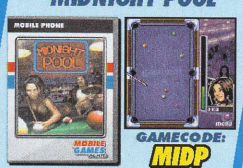
GAMECODE: **MIDP**
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GAMECODE: **FRUIT2**
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GAMECODE: **SBMAN**
Play this feature rich Bomberman game with great graphics, lots of sounds, normal and versus mode.

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GAMECODE: **CANNON**
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GAMECODE: **SONIC**
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GAMECODE: **LEMMING**
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CHECK OUT THE CHEATS BOOK FOR MORE!

We've been inundated with new cheats this issue – from *New Super Mario Bros.* on DS to the new *X-Men* game to the superbly addictive *Rockstar Table Tennis*. Find out how to unlock the best secrets and characters or just how to finish your games without actually having to put in too much work! See you next month...

Bringing you the cheats that you need!

Tip of the Month

New Super Mario Bros

DS

- ☑ Unlock new worlds
- ☑ Classic Mario references
- ☑ Infinite lives

Play as Luigi
At the "Select A File" screen, highlight a file, then hold L + R and press A to play as Luigi in Single Player mode.

World 4
Defeat the Boss in the last castle of World 2 with Mini Mario to unlock World 4.

World 7
Defeat the Boss in the last castle of World 5 with Mini Mario to unlock World 7.

World 8
Defeat the Boss in the last castle of World 6 with Mega Mario to unlock World 8.

Toad House bonuses
Successfully complete a stage with the time having the last two digits of the same number to get a different colour Toad House with bonus at the start of the next World: Have a time ending in 11, 22, or 33 for a red Toad House that awards items. Have a time ending in 44, 55, or 66 for a green extra life-giving Toad House. Have a time ending in 77, 88, or 99 for an orange Toad House with a Mega Mushroom.

Infinite lives
In World 2-4, just past the two Piranha Plants after the mid-level point, you'll come to a staircase with a turtle coming down it. Jump on the turtle just as it is about to go off the third stair from the bottom. If done correctly, Mario will keep jumping on the turtle and earn up to 99 lives.

X-Men: The Official Game

PS2

- ☑ Unlock all character missions
- ☑ Bonus costumes!

Iceman Danger Room missions
At the Cerebro Files menu, press →, →, ←, ←, ↓, ↑, ↓, ↑, START.

Nightcrawler Danger Room missions
At the Cerebro Files menu, press ↑, ↑, ↓, ↓, ←, →, ←, →, START.

Wolverine Danger Room missions
At the Cerebro Files menu, press ↓, ↓, ↑, ↑, →, ←, →, ←, START.

Danger Room missions
Successfully complete an Act with a character to unlock one of their Danger Room missions. Successfully complete all three Acts with a character to unlock all three missions.

Bonus costumes
Collect all Weapon X files with a character to unlock their street costume. Collect all Sentinal Techs with a character to unlock their comic costume.

Rockstar Table Tennis

360

- ☑ All characters unlocked!

Play as Carmen
Get 35 wins against the CPU in Tournament or Exhibition mode on any difficulty setting to unlock. Alternatively, win the All-Star Circuit.

Play as Cassidy
Get 40 wins against the CPU in Tournament or Exhibition mode on any difficulty setting to unlock. Alternatively, win the Rookie Circuit under the default settings in less than 14.5 minutes.

Play as Juergen
Get 20 wins against the CPU in Tournament or Exhibition mode on any difficulty setting to unlock. Alternatively, win the Amateur Circuit.

Play as Jung Soo
Get 45 wins against the CPU in Tournament or Exhibition mode on any difficulty setting to unlock. Alternatively, win the Rookie Circuit.

Play as Kumi
Get 25 wins against the CPU in Tournament or Exhibition mode on any difficulty setting to unlock. Alternatively, win the Rookie Circuit.

Play as Mark
Get 50 wins against the CPU in Tournament or Exhibition mode on any difficulty setting to unlock. Alternatively, win the Rookie Circuit under the default settings in less than 13.5 minutes.

Play as Solayman
Get 30 wins against the CPU in Tournament or Exhibition mode on any difficulty to unlock. Or win the Pro Circuit.

Table Tennis fever has gripped the *GM* office. Reckon you've got what it takes to beat us online?

Nightcrawler has a very hard time finding shoes that fit. Still, he's good in a fight, and that's the main thing.

Your Top 10 Tips

Share your top tips with us, the best one wins a game!

1. Grand Theft Auto: Liberty City Stories

PS2 PSP

Rampage without getting wanted stars

Start a new game. Instead of taking Vincenzo to the Safe House, leave him in the car and don't get in. Now you can roam free and do whatever you want without getting any stars at all! Not bad, eh?

Billy Bryers, via email

2. Elder Scrolls IV: Oblivion

360

Duplicate items

Equip a bow with any sort of arrows, draw back an arrow but DON'T let go. Go into your inventory with the arrow still drawn back, and un-equip the arrows that you have currently equipped. Then click onto another type of arrow TWICE and then drop the item you want duplicated (it only works with ONE item at a time). Hundreds of the item you just dropped will appear on the floor right in front of you. You MUST have two DIFFERENT types of arrow for this to work.

Ian Parker, via email

3. Grand Theft Auto: San Andreas

PS2

Walk around Under water.

If you activate a two-player free roam mission, and go to where the sea plane is, (I advise marking it on the map), enter the infinite oxygen cheat (PS2: ↓, ←, L1, ↓, ↓, R2, ↓, L2. Xbox: ↓, ←, L, ↓, ↓, ●, ↓, ○, ↓). Have player one (MUST BE PLAYER 1) enter the sea plane, but DO NOT TAKE OFF, and have player two, once player one is inside, go up to the driver's side and press A and you should drag player one out. Next thing you know, player one will be

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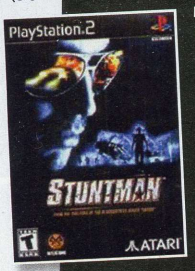
MOTO GP 2006 360
ACHIEVEMENTS

Accredited (100 points): All rider credits awarded.
Challenge Expert (30 points): 50 Challenges completed.
Challenge Master (60 points): All Challenges completed.
Extreme Bike Collector (50 points): Buy all extreme bikes.
Extreme Mode Champion (10 points): Win any Extreme mode championship.
Extreme 1000 – Legend (60 points): Win a Career mode Extreme 1000 season on the Legend difficulty setting.
Extreme 1200 – Champion (50 points): Win a Career mode Extreme 1200 season on the Champion difficulty setting.
Extreme 1200 – Legend (75 points): Win a Career mode Extreme 1200 season on the Legend difficulty setting.
Extreme 1200 – Professional (25 points): Win a Career mode Extreme 1200 season on the Pro difficulty setting.
Extreme 600 – Legend (30 points): Win a Career mode Extreme 600 season on the Legend difficulty setting.
GP: Champion (60 points): Win a Career mode Grand Prix season on the Champion difficulty setting.
GP: Legend (100 points): Win a Career mode Grand Prix season on the Legend difficulty setting.
GP: Professional (30 points): Win a Career mode Grand Prix season on the Pro difficulty setting.
GP: Rookie (10 points): Win a Career mode Grand Prix season on the Rookie difficulty setting.
Seeded #1 (75 points): Seed #1 reached.
Seeded #10 (50 points): Seed #10 reached.
Seeded #25 (30 points): Seed #25 reached.
Seeded #50 (20 points): Seed #50 reached.
Seeded #75 (15 points): Seed #75 reached.
Seeded #90 (10

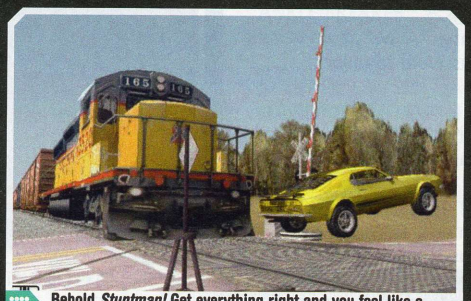
STUNTMAN
PUBLISHER: ATARI
YEAR OF RELEASE: 2002

Good for perfectionists, bad for the easily frustrated, *Stuntman* perfectly induces that tense sweaty feeling you get in a game when not messing up is crucial. Except instead of just having a few of those moments, the whole game is one long tense sweaty moment as for minutes at a time you have to hit every checkpoint and make every jump, all at exactly the right speed.

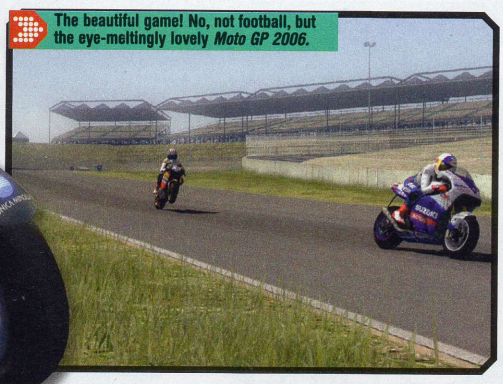
Fortunately, it wasn't a completely sadistic affair. There were ways of just cheating your way though it...



Unlock everything
Enter the code BiNdErS



Behold *Stuntman!* Get everything right and you feel like a king. But getting everything right is darned difficult...



The beautiful game! No, not football, but the eye-meltingly lovely *Moto GP 2006.*

TOP 20 CHEATS

Oh cheaty cheats how we adore thee! Check out our updated UK Top 20...

01 FIFA WORLD CUP PS2 XBOX CUBE GBA PC DS PSP 360

DO IT: Win the World Cup with a Europe team.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks all European teams. This works in the same way with Asian, American and African teams.

02 PRO EVOLUTION SOCCER 5 PS2 XBOX PC PSP

DO IT: Start an international league and select only two teams to enter the league. You will only have to play two games to earn match winning points and 1,500 PES points each time you win the league.
WHAT IT DOES: Gets you easy-peasy PES points.

03 TOMB RAIDER: LEGEND PS2 XBOX PC 360

DO IT: (PS2) Successfully complete the game and all time trials. While playing, do the following: hold L2 and press ⊗, R1, ○, R1, L1, □.
(Xbox) While playing the game, hold White and press A, R, B, R, L, X.
WHAT IT DOES: Lara wields a Soul Reaver.

04 ANIMAL CROSSING: WILD WORLD DS

DO IT: In the winter, create a snowman by rolling up the snowballs you occasionally see laying around. Push one on to the other and a snowman is created with the correct proportions. The next day, as a way of saying thanks, he'll mail you an item.
WHAT IT DOES: Gets you a rare item from the snowman set.

05 CHAMPIONSHIP MANAGER 2006 PC PSP

DO IT: Sign Lyon striker Hatem Ben Arfa.
WHAT IT DOES: By 2009 he's World Class and worth a fortune.

06 X-MEN: THE OFFICIAL GAME PS2 XBOX CUBE 360

DO IT: Successfully complete an Act with any character.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks that character's corresponding bonus Danger Room mission.

07 GHOST RECON: ADVANCED WARFIGHTER PS2 XBOX 360

DO IT: (Xbox) At the mission select screen press Y, R, B, Y, R, B, X.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks all levels.

08 THE SIMS 2 PS2 PC DS PSP

DO IT: (PS2) While playing a game, press L1, R1, ↑, ⊗, R2. The Cheat Gnome (Plumb Bob Trophy) will appear on the lots and the following codes can be enabled:
(XBox) As above but press L, R, ↑, A, B.
(GC) As above but press L, R, ↑, A, Z.
WHAT IT DOES: Enables Cheat Gnome.

09 ICE AGE 2: THE MELTDOWN PS2 XBOX GBA DS

DO IT: Pause the game and press ↓, ↓, ←, ↑, ↑, →, ↑, ↓.
WHAT IT DOES: Gives you unlimited pebbles.

10 THE GODFATHER PS2 XBOX PC

DO IT: (PS2) Pause game and press ○, □, ○, □, □, L3.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks all movies.

11 FIFA STREET 2 PS2 XBOX DS PSP

DO IT: (PS2) Hold L1 and △ and press ←, ↑, ↑, →, ↓, ↓, →, ↓.
(XB + GC) Hold L and Y and press ←, ↓, ↓, →, ↓, ↓, →, ↓.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks all venues.

12 THE DA VINCI CODE PS2 XBOX CUBE

DO IT: At the Codes screen enter the code 'Vitruvian Man'.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks God mode.

13 FOOTBALL MANAGER 2006 PC PSP 360

DO IT: Buy Karadeniz Gokdeniz, Jeremy Mathieu, Daniel Agger and Valeri Bojinov.
WHAT IT DOES: They'll all top, cheapish players who'll boost your chances of winning.

14 THE ELDER SCROLLS IV: OBLIVION PC 360

DO IT: Complete the Cure for Vampirism mission then talk to Janus Hassidor. When you talk to him, ask him about the "Reward" conversation option, but don't leave the conversation, and keep asking him about it. Everytime you ask him about it you receive 1000 gold.
WHAT IT DOES: Gets you unlimited gold!

15 BUZZ! THE BIG QUIZ PS2

DO IT: Keep pressing the buzzer repeatedly.
WHAT IT DOES: Makes your quiz show host make a different comment every time.

16 FIGHT NIGHT: ROUND 3 PS2 360

DO IT: Select 'Create a Champ' mode and change the first name to 'NEWVIEW'.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlock all venues

17 URBAN CHAOS: RIOT RESPONSE PS2 XBOX

DO IT: Complete the game.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks the Terror difficulty level and loads of medals.

18 THE SIMS 2: FAMILY FUN STUFF PC

WHAT IT DOES: No cheats for this – there's only so much an add-on of new items has to offer...

19 KING KONG: OFFICIAL GAME OF THE MOVIE PS2 XBOX DS PSP

DO IT: Light spears and bone on fire before hurling at enemies.
WHAT IT DOES: Deals out more damage.

20 MONSTER HUNTER: FREEDOM PSP

DO IT: Beat the offline five star mission 'Slay the Rathian'.
WHAT IT DOES: Unlocks Rathian Ecology gallery.

walking around under water!
Aaron Stone, via email

4. FIFA WORLD CUP 2006 (ALL FORMATS)

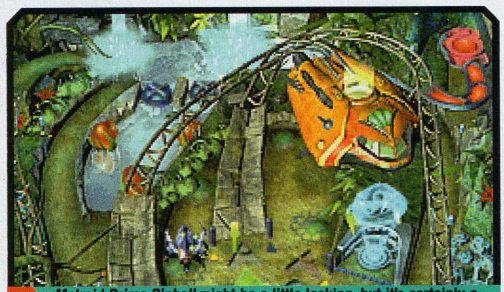
1. Stick to simple passing and build up play. Unless you're confident about using the skill moves, don't.
2. Develop a bank of formations you can change to if it's a tight game or if you're down by a few goals.
3. Take your time and use the right passes. It's crucial.
4. Use through balls only in the final third of the pitch.
5. Aiming low at the near post often yields a goal, as well as going across the goal from the outside box works, if you keep it low. Use the practice field to hone your skills.
6. Don't use the chip shot. Too many people ruin chances because they've opted for a fancy little chip rather than just tapping it in.
7. The secondary-defender button is your friend. Hold it down and your nearest team-mate will pressure the attacker.
8. The slide tackle should only really be used if you're close to a player and pressurising them, or to block a cross or a shot.
9. Don't be afraid to put in a bit of time on the training ground, and practice those free kicks. Corners and free kicks are great for stealing a game, and can often be the deciding factor when up against an opponent of equal skill.
10. The best way to get good at any game is to compete against the best players. Even if you lose, you'll be learning.

Chris Lloyd, via email

Chris Lloyd's tips should see you right for *FIFA.*

5. FIFA WORLD CUP 2006 360

Complete the following tasks to



Metroid Prime Pinball might be a little lacking, but it's certainly a beautiful-looking game.

points): Seed #90 reached. **Stunt Mode Rider** (10 points): Play a Stunt mode game in Multi-player mode.

METROID PRIME PINBALL DS

☑ BONUS TABLES UNLOCKED!

☑ EXPERT MODE MADNESS!

ARTIFACT TEMPLE TABLE
Collect all twelve artifacts in Multi-Mission mode to unlock the Artifact Temple table in Single Mission mode.

IMPACT CRATER TABLE
Defeat Metroid Prime in Multi-Mission mode to unlock the special Impact Crater table in the Single Mission mode.

PHAZON MINES TABLE
Defeat the Omega Pirate in Multi-Mission mode to unlock the Phazon Mines table in Single Mission mode.

PHENDRANA DRIFTS TABLE
Defeat Thardus in Multi-Mission mode to unlock the Phendrana Drifts table in Single Mission mode.

EXPERT MODE
Successfully complete Multi-Mission mode and view the credits to unlock Expert mode under the options menu.

LOCOROCO PSP

IDLE SEQUENCES
While playing the game, split all of the Rocos apart in a safe place. After a while they will start to play with each other, sing along to the backing track or line up and count to the number of Rocos you have. Cute!

METAL GEAR ACID 2 PSP

☑ CARD PASSWORDS!

STRAIN CARD (NO. 046)
Enter "NOJIRI" as a password to unlock.

GIJIN-SAN CARD (NO. 099)
Enter "SHINTA" as a password to unlock.

REACTION BLOCK CARD (NO. 118)
Enter "KONAMI" as a password to unlock.

VIPER CARD (NO. 161)
Enter "VIPER" as a password to unlock.

MIKA SLAYTON CARD (NO. 166)
Enter "MIKA" as a password to unlock.

KAREN HOUJOU CARD (NO. 170)
Enter "KAREN" as a password to unlock.

JEHUTY CARD (NO. 172)
Enter "JEHUTY" as a password to unlock.

XM EIGHT CARD (NO. 187)
Enter "XM8" as a password to unlock.

MR. SIGINT CARD (NO. 188)
Enter "SIGNT" as a password to unlock.

SEA HARRIER CARD (NO. 197)
Enter "SHRRR" as a password to unlock.

DECOY OCTOPUS CARD (NO. 203)
Enter "DCY" as a password to unlock.

ROGER MCCOY CARD (NO. 212)
Enter "MCCY" as a password to unlock.

REIKO HINOMOTO CARD (NO. 281)
Enter "HNMT" as a password to unlock.

KINOSHITA AYUMI CARD (NO. 285)
Enter "AYM" as a password to unlock.

ISHII MEGURU CARD (NO. 286)
Enter "MGR" as a password to unlock.

NATSUME SANO CARD (NO. 287)
Enter "NTM" as a password to unlock. This also unlocks the "Solid Eye" video.

MGS4 CARD (NO. 288)
Enter "NEXTGEN" as a password to unlock.

JACK CARD (NO. 291)
Enter "SONOFSULLY" as a password to unlock. The Jack card allows you to move one extra space when you move, but your attack is reduced by 20 points. This effect lasts for three turns.

SOLID SNAKE MGS4 CARD (NO. 294)
Enter "SNAKE" as a password to unlock. This card sets your equipment level to 3.

OTACON MGS4 CARD (NO. 295)
Enter "OTACON" as a password to unlock.

METAL GEAR MK. II MGS4 CARD
Enter "MK2" as a password to unlock.

BANANA PEEL CARD
Enter "RONALDSIU" as a password to unlock.

EMMA'S PARROT CARD
Enter "GINORMOUSJ" as a password to unlock.

GEKKO
Enter "GEKKO" as a password to unlock.

NO SMOKING CARD
Enter "SMOKING" as a password to unlock.

POSSESSED ARM CARD

A bit of hot *Acid* action for your delectation. She doesn't look very happy, though, does she?

GREATEST CHEATS EVER!

GET THOSE RINGS WITH A MINIMUM OF GAMING EFFORT!

SONIC THE HEDGEHOG (MEGADRIVE)

PUBLISHER: SEGA
YEAR IF RELEASE: 1991

Who could forgot this classic cheat – there were sighs of relief the world over when it finally materialised. A way of seeing the end of the game without actually having to spin through every single level and collect a million or so rings...

Level Select
On the title screen press up, down, left, right and you will hear a ring sound. Hold down A and press Start for a level select and sound test.

Fancy selecting whichever level you want? Well, now you can!

YOUR TOP 10 TIPS

get game score points:
Qualify for the World Cup (50 pts): qualify for the World Cup in 2006 FIFA World Cup mode. Beat the Host Nation (50 pts): defeat Germany in a full match. Finish a scenario (150 pts): finish any challenge in Global Challenge mode. Finish all scenarios (250 pts): finish all the challenges in Global Challenge mode. Win the World Cup (500 pts): win the World Cup in 2006 FIFA World Cup mode.

Ollie Organ, Glos

6. NEW SUPER MARIO BROS DS

Fifth BG Wallpaper
After you beat the game and the blue background wallpaper Toad House appears in world one, you'll notice that the last walipaper to the right is a dotted line. To unlock it, defeat every stage and find all the hidden exits. (This includes paying to open up the paths to Toad Houses). Once you do, the blue Toad House will have the final wallpaper up for 20 Star Coins.

Gary Knowles, via email

7. NINTENDOGS DS

Take a walk anytime!
When going for a walk, go to the park. When you go to the park, change your dog's accessory (collar, hat etc). The game will save. When it does, turn off your DS, start the game back up again and you will be able to go for another walk without having to wait. This glitch is useful for going through lots of question marks and getting more presents. However, your walking bar will not go up if you do this.

Tom Hart, via email

8. RUMBLE ROSES XX 360

Get "Fantasia" Intro every time in Queens Match
At the Vs. screen in Queens Match, push and hold the right trigger and push A. When the match starts the girls will peform an alternative intro to the song "Fantasia".

Gem Anderson, Norwich

9. BATTLEFIELD 2 PC

Stay outside the map border forever!
This glitch allows you to stay outside of the

Enter "THESPANIARD" as a password to unlock.

SOLID EYE CARD
Enter "TOBIDACID" as a password to unlock.

NBA BALLERS: REBOUND PSP

- ☑ ALTERNATIVE GEAR
- ☑ EXTRA PLAYERS
- ☑ SLAM DUNKIN' MOVIES

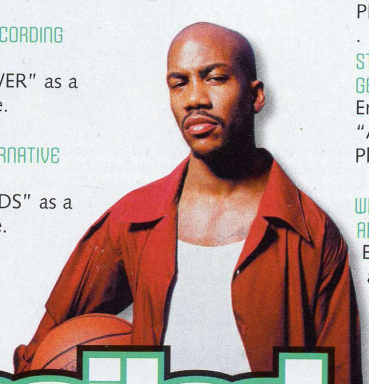
ALL ALTERNATIVE GEAR, PLAYERS, AND MOVIES
Enter "NBA BALLERS TRUE PLAYA" as a Phrase-ology code.

ALLEN IVERSON'S RECORDING STUDIO
Enter "THE ANSWER" as a Phrase-ology code.

CHRIS WEBER'S ALTERNATIVE GEAR
Enter "24 SECONDS" as a Phrase-ology code.

CLYDE DREXLER'S ALTERNATIVE GEAR
Enter "CLYDE THE GLIDE" as a Phrase-ology code.

LEBRON JAMES' ALTERNATIVE GEAR

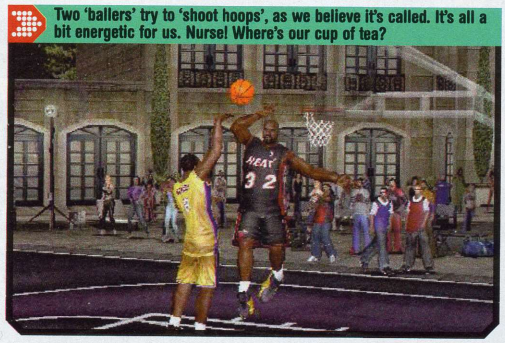


Enter "KING JAMES" as a Phrase-ology code.

SCOTTIE PIPPEN'S YACHT
Enter "NICE YACHT" as a Phrase-ology code.

STEVE FRANCIS' ALTERNATIVE GEAR
Enter "RISING STAR" or "ANKLE BREAKER" as a Phrase-ology code.

WILT CHAMBERLAIN'S ALTERNATIVE GEAR
Enter "WILT THE STILT" as a Phrase-ology code.

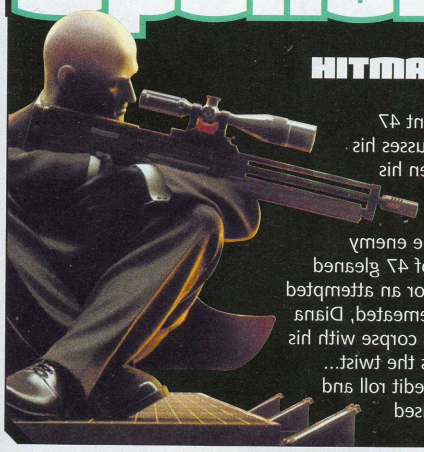


Two 'ballers' try to 'shoot hoops', as we believe it's called. It's all a bit energetic for us. Nurse! Where's our cup of tea?

Spoiler!

Get a mirror to decipher this devilishly clever spoiler.

HITMAN: BLOOD MONEY



Upon escaping the Whitehouse, Agent 47 returns to his hideout, where he discusses his future with Diana. But suddenly, when his back is turned, she injects him with poison, dropping him like a stone! Turns out she was in cahoots with the enemy all along, and they use the footage of 47 gleaned from the Whitehouse to frame him for an attempted assassination. As he's about to be cremeated, Diana plants a kiss on 47's cheek, poses his corpse with his favourite ballers and leaves. But he's the twist... waggle the analogue stick as the credit roll and 47 will come to life! Diana actually used

CONSOLETATION ZONE

GM – coming to the aid of stuck gamers since 1993!

ICO PS2

Dear Gamesmaster,
I am completely stuck on *Ico* on the waterfall puzzle! What do I do after I have pulled a switch which activates a mysterious machine? How do I get to the Idol doors underneath the waterfall? Please help me! Thank you.
Connor Rosewell, Essex

Every so often, Robin remembers the majesty of *Ico* and breaks down in tears. He's an emotional man.

Pull the lever, go to the ground floor then jump on the bouncing beam facing the grating and grab the ledge. Climb out of the window down to the river. Climb onto the wooden platform and jump onto the waterwheel. Jump to the pull up bar and then roof; turn the waterwheel off, drain the river, push the block into the river bed. Head to the top of the dam then rotate the switch counter-clockwise until the floodgates shut. Head down to the bottom and beat up the three demons you find there then head through the idol doors.

Jump, Ico, jump! The horned boy wonder has certainly got his work cut out for him.

OBLIVION

Dear *GM*,
I was wondering if you could help me with *Oblivion*. I cannot get the Cheydinal Recommendation as I cannot find the Ring of Burden once I am inside the well. The green arrow indicates that I am in the correct place but there's no ring to be seen. Your help with this matter would be greatly appreciated as this is beginning to nark me right off .
Paul Barwick

Sounds like you need help quick, Paul. The reason you can't see the ring is because you need to use a spell to see down there. Cast your water-breathing spell and find the body of the previous Associate sent after the ring. Take the ring from his body, then drop it to the bottom of the well.

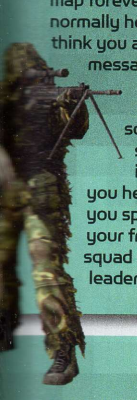
Return to the guild and Deetsan tells you to search Falcar's quarters for the letter of recommendation. You don't find a letter, but you find two black soul gems. Take these to Deetsan to end this quest and hopefully your frustration...

GOT A PROBLEM? STUCK IN A GAME?

WE CAN HELP! EMAIL IT TO US AT GAMESMASTERTIPS@FUTURENET.CO.UK, SUBJECT: CONSOLETATION; OR WRITE TO CONSOLETATION ZONE, GAMESMASTER, 30 MONMOUTH STREET, BATH. BA1 2BW. IF WE CAN'T HELP - YOU'VE HAD IT!

WE WANT YOUR TIPS!

We want your best tips and secrets for any game. Make sure they're cool thin
you've discovered and email them to gamesmastertips@futurenet.co.uk
or by post to My Top Ten Tips, GamesMaster, 30 Monmouth Street,
Bath, BA1 2BW. The best tip every month gets a free game.



map forever, where you should normally hear the "where do you think you are going, soldier..." message.

You can do this with a friend by making a squad together. The squad leader goes out into the red zone where you hear the message and you spawn in on him. Have your friend die and leave the squad so you become squad leader and let him spawn in on you. Now the two of you can stay outside and never die from the out of bounds penalty.
Chris Campbell, via email

10. OUTRUN 2006: COAST 2 COAST

Complete game 100% and get
Get 1000000 outrun miles
Enter the following codes as a name when editing a license. However, you must decline when asked to confirm the changes.
100% Completion
ENTIRETY
Get 1000000 outrun miles
MILESANDMILES
Andrew Taylor, via email

GM'S TOP 5 MOST WANTED TIPS

01 ROCKSTAR TABLE TENNIS
We're pretty much chronically addicted to playing this online. Share your strategies for winning with us!

02 LOCO ROCO
How cute is this game? But behind the sentient blobs with eyes are some rock hard secrets to find. Which tricky ones have you managed to uncover?

03 GTA LIBERTY CITY STORIES
Yes, *GTA* is back with another game on the PS2. While it's mostly the same as the PSP version, have Rockstar sneaked in any new secrets for the PS2? You tell us if you've found anything funny.

04 NEW SUPER MARIO BROS
Multi-player tips, single player secrets – we want to hear them all.

05 HALF LIFE 2: EPISODE ONE.
Got any tips for surviving this horror fest? Share them with the world!

Know How To...

Your guide to all that's weird and wonderful in Grand Theft Auto!

TIPSTER
Steve Bailey

TIME TO COMPLETE
What, *all* of the GTA games? Blimey, months probably...

BEST BIT
So many! But the parachute jump in *San Andreas* is a particular favourite.

HARDEST BIT
Those on-foot shooting missions. The aiming's not as good as it should be...

Where are you stuck?

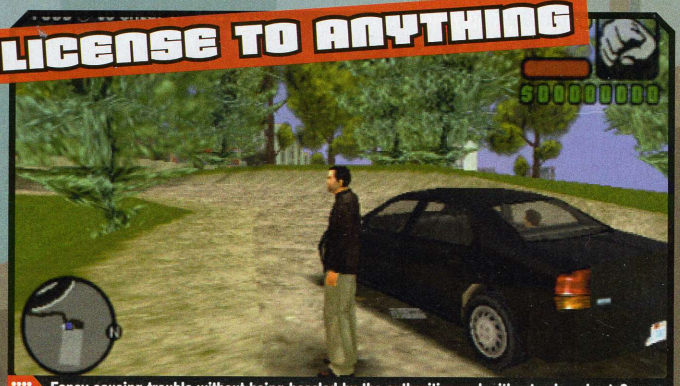
LOOKING FOR WORK?
This guide is more about weird and wacky stuff, but if you're at a loss for something to do in any of the *GTAs*, always check your map. It'll show where the people you need to speak to are...

SUIT UP!
Always make sure you've got some body armour equipped, once you're able to visit the Ammu Nation store. It'll quite literally save your life. And nobody wants an untimely death, do they?

grand theft auto
Liberty City Stories™

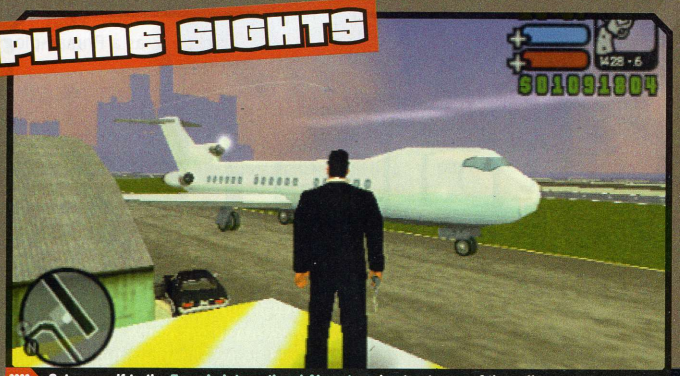
We love *GTA* games because they're bursting at the seams with things to do and secrets to see, but they're so enormously huge that a guide is damn near essential if you want to find some of the weirder bits and bobs tucked away. This isn't a walkthrough in the traditional sense – instead, in honour of the release of *Liberty City Stories* on the PS2, we've provided you with a bunch of neat tips, glitches and Easter eggs that you may not have found yet within *GTA 3*, *Vice City*, *San Andreas* and *Liberty City Stories*, and are good for a laugh if nothing else. So what are you waiting for? Dive on in and enjoy!

License to Anything



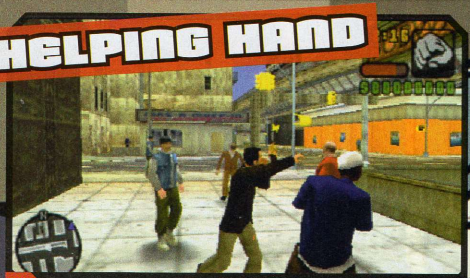
Fancy causing trouble without being hassled by the authorities and without using cheats? When you start a new game, simply don't get into Vincenzo's car – now you're free to explore and cause trouble without the police getting involved.

Plane Sights



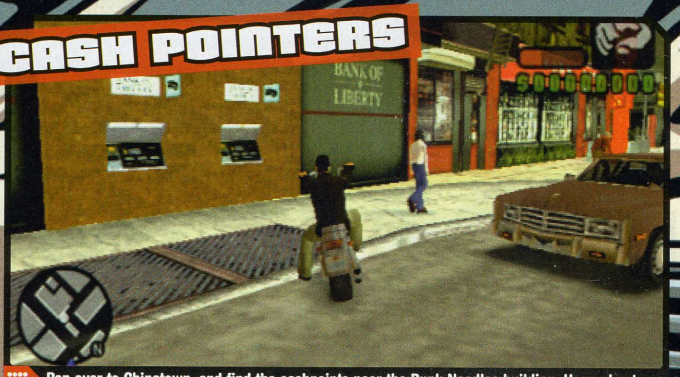
Get yourself to the Francis International Airport, and get onto one of the yellow ramps next to the runway. When a plane passes, you can leap onto one of its wings, and enjoy a free ride – it's tricky to stay on the wing, but if you will insist on messing around...

Helping Hand



Remember this from *Vice City*? If you see a cop chasing a criminal, you can earn yourself a very quick buck by thumping the crim. You'll receive a $50 Good Citizen bonus, but don't hit them more than once or you'll get yourself a wanted rating.

Cash Pointers



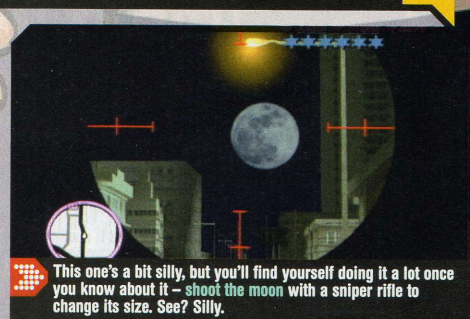
Pop over to Chinatown, and find the cashpoints near the Punk Noodles building. Hang about until you seen someone use one of them – if you fancy picking up a financial boost early on in the game, take these people down to reap good money.

Top 5 Cheats

Remember – cheats can mess up your game, and you can't undo them without reloading.

◎, ◎, R1, ⊗, ⊗, L1, ◎, ◎ – Makes drivers aggressive.
↓, ↓, ↓, ◎, ◎, ⊗, L1, R1 – Big head mode
◎, ⊗, ↓, ◎, ⊗, ↑, L1, L1 – Cars can drive over water
↓, ↓, ↓, △, △, ◎, L1, R1 – Everyone follows you.
↓, ↓, ↓, ⊗, ⊗, □, R1, L1 – Upside down world (for lefties).

Shoot the Moon



This one's a bit silly, but you'll find yourself doing it a lot once you know about it – shoot the moon with a sniper rifle to change its size. See? Silly.

Pimp Your Ride

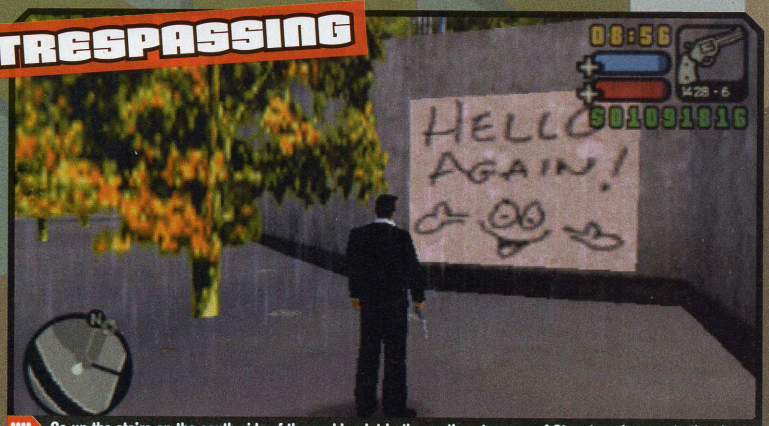
Bulletproof cars crop up in missions, and occasionally as a reward. These will only spawn once, so fail the mission in question, then take them home and plonk them in the garage, then save. Try shooting them as a test – this way you can gather some extremely useful rides.

KNOW HOW TO...

HAPPY CUSTOMER

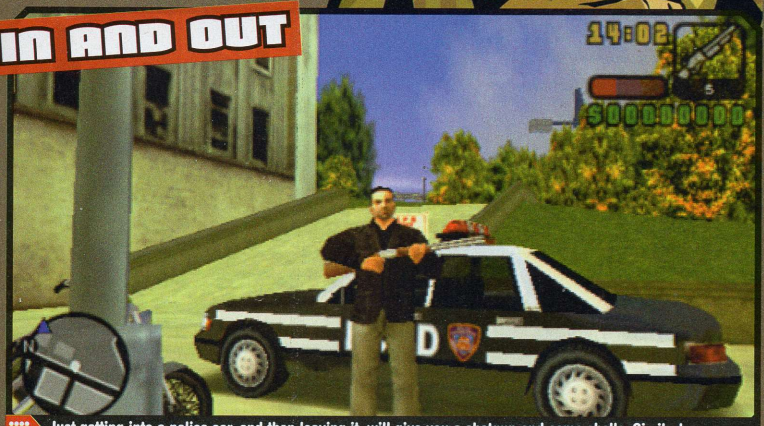
Find a car, and pull up next to a prostitute at nighttime. She'll jump in; drive off to a quiet place and stop. Your health will rise past the maximum of 100, but it'll cost you.

TRESPASSING



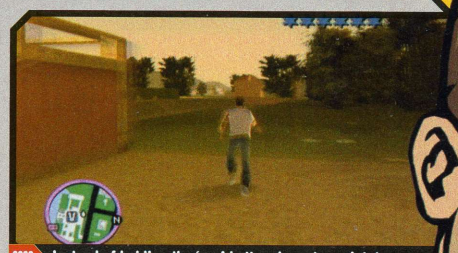
Go up the stairs on the south side of the parking lot in the northeast corner of Staunton. Jump onto the short railing, then run over the roof and jump onto the Liberty City Tree Building. On the other side is a courtyard to jump down into; on the wall you'll find a secret message...

IN AND OUT



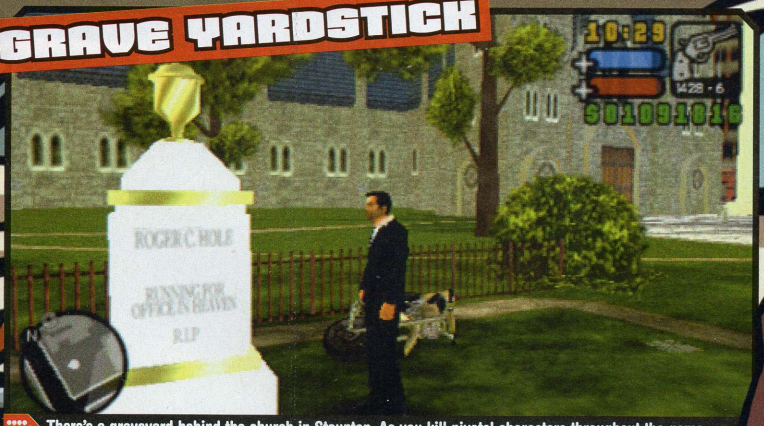
Just getting into a police car, and then leaving it, will give you a shotgun and some shells. Similarly, ambulances will give you a health boost, Enforcer trucks give full body armour and taxis offer a tiny bit of cash if you're well and truly strapped.

RUNNING, MAN



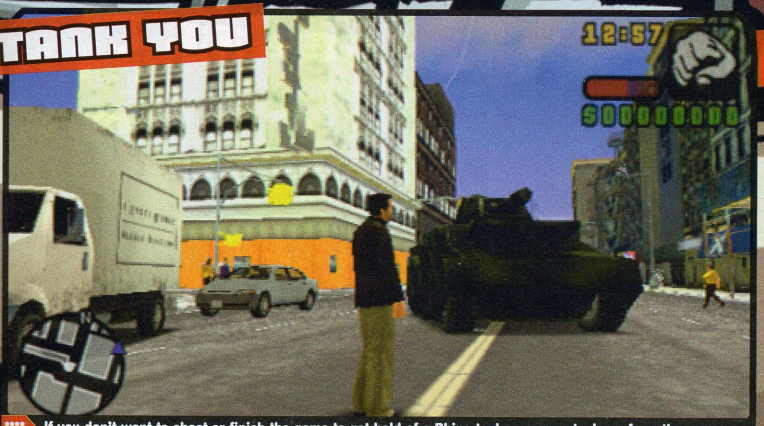
Instead of holding the 'run' button down to sprint, try tapping it instead. That way, you'll be able to run for much, much longer; time it well, and you can sprint forever. Which is nice.

GRAVE YARDSTICK



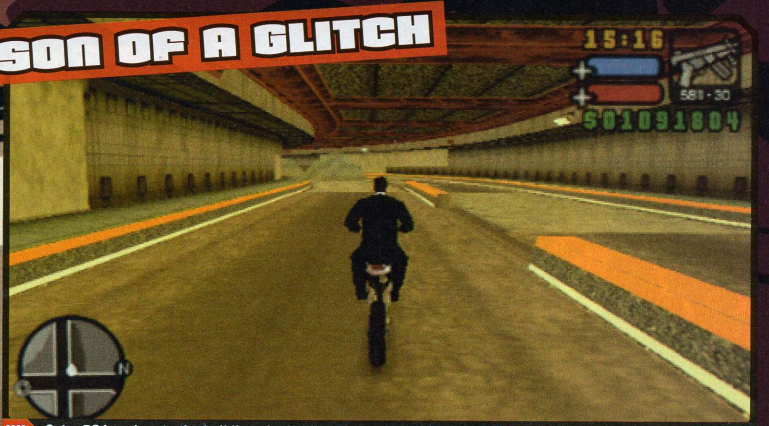
There's a graveyard behind the church in Staunton. As you kill pivotal characters throughout the game, their gravestones will appear here. Now, if only we could find a way to bring the bunch of flowers from San Andreas into Liberty City, we could pay our respects...

TANK YOU



If you don't want to cheat or finish the game to get hold of a Rhino tank, you can steal one from the army when you've got a maximum wanted rating, or park one in your garage during the 'Shogun Showdown' mission before detonating it – it'll be repaired and ready to go. Best park it in your Staunton garage, too.

SON OF A GLITCH



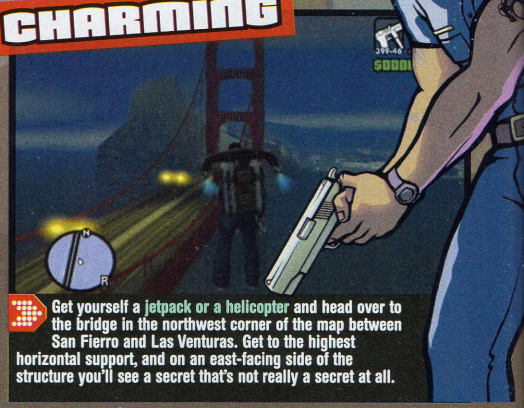
Get a PCJ, and go to the building site behind the hospital in Rockford. Break the barrier at the front, then get a run up and hit the mound of dirt inside the site, jumping over to the second roof. Go to the wall on the right, and ride slowly into it – you'll fall into the weird, inescapable 'ghost' tunnels down below.

grand theft auto San Andreas

FREE PARKING

You can get more cars in your garage by jamming the door open with a parked truck, and then wedging some extra vehicles in. Trouble is, they may not save...

CHARMING



Get yourself a jetpack or a helicopter and head over to the bridge in the northwest corner of the map between San Fierro and Las Venturas. Get to the highest horizontal support, and on an east-facing side of the structure you'll see a secret that's not really a secret at all.

BULLET TIME

Want access to unlimited ammo without cheating? Head into any branch of Ammu Nation that has a shooting range. Buy a weapon, go into the range, and then exit. Each time you do this, you'll get a bonus amount of ammo. Repeat until satisfied.

TRY-ATHLON

If you visit Santa Maria Beach or Palamino Creek Beach on a weekend (Saturday or Sunday) you'll be able to enter a triathlon event. These are pretty hard, and involve an exhausting combination of biking, swimming and sprinting, but you'll get $10,000 for winning...

TOP 5 CHEATS

These cheats will work for Xbox as well; use the triggers for L1 and R1 and ◉/◯ for R2/L2.

L2, ↑, R1, R1, ←, R1, R1, R2, →, ↓ – Gang wars everywhere.

↑, ↓, ←, →, L1, L2, R1, R2, ↑, ↓, ←, → – Spawn a jetpack.

△, △, L1, □, □, ○, □, ↓, ○ – Funny costumes all round.

↑, ↑, △, △, ↑, ↑, ←, →, □, R2, R2 – CJ can super-jump.

△, □, ○, ○, □, ○, ○, L1, L2, L2, R1, R2 – Bikes do massive jumps.

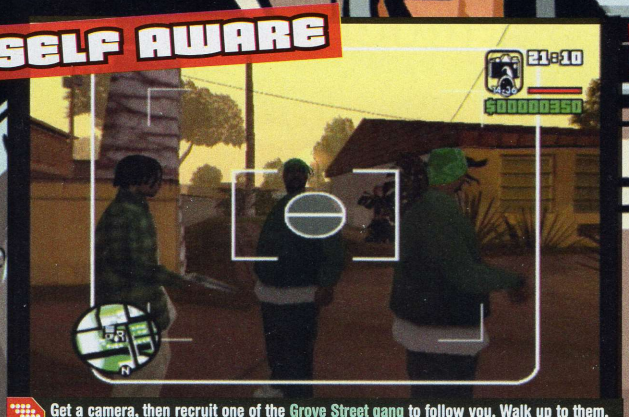
BIN THERE

Head over to the Clucking Bell in Angel Pine. Opposite, you'll see three bins; knock them all over, and a pile of Vice City maps will spill out. Pointless, sure, but goes to show just how much extra detail Rockstar puts into the *GTA* games.

MOUNT CHEAT-IAD

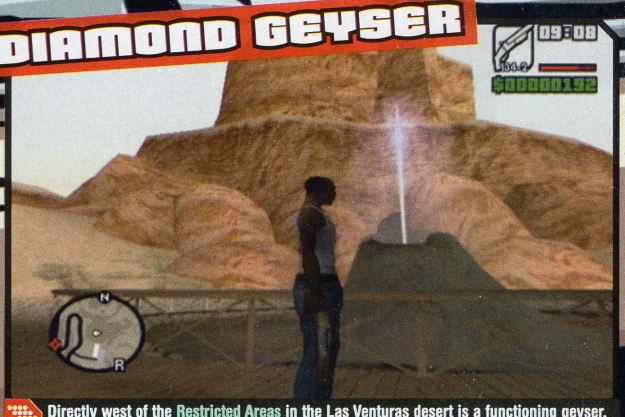
Having trouble winning the Mount Chiliad bike races? You can toss a grenade at your opponents before the race begins, and you won't be disqualified. Or, let everyone finish, then snipe them before you cross the finish line. Dirty tactics, but if you're desperate...

SELF AWARE



Get a camera, then recruit one of the Grove Street gang to follow you. Walk up to them, and you'll get a prompt that'll allow you to take a picture of yourself! You can move CJ around to get the best shot, and you'll be able to save it – the perfect souvenir.

DIAMOND GEYSER



Directly west of the Restricted Areas in the Las Venturas desert is a functioning geyser. There's no gameplay reason for it to be there, but people gather round it to have a nose at the watery gush. Why not take a picture, eh?

grand theft auto Vice City

MAXIMUM WAGE

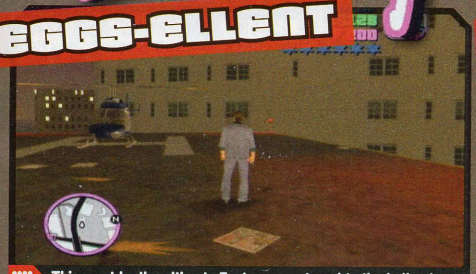
Travel over to the Downtown area on the second island, drive around and you'll soon see a street lined with parking meters. These are tough to break open – using either a vehicle or weapon – but there are great big fistfuls of cash inside them.

TOP 5 CHEATS

If you're going to be mucking about with cheats, you'd best make a separate save file for yourself.

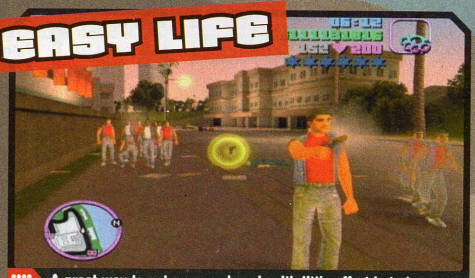
△, L1, △, R2, ○, L1, L1 – Cars are invisible.
R2, L2, R1, L1, L2, R2, ○, △, ◎, △, L2, L1 – Makes cars explode.
△, ↑, →, ↓, L2, L1, ○ – Speeds everything up.
→, R2, ◎, R1, L2, ↓, L1, R1 – Cars can fly.
L2, ◎, R1, L2, ←, R1, L1, R2, L2 – Aggressive drivers.

EGGS-ELLENT



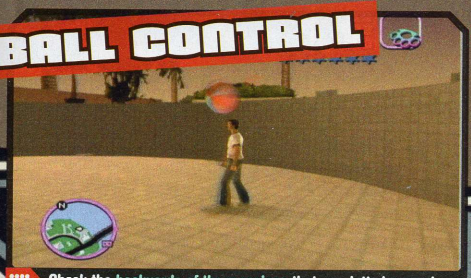
This must be the ultimate Easter egg – travel to the helipad on the Vice City News building (use a chopper). There's a tall building close by whose wall you can jump through – inside is a 'real' chocolate Easter egg bearing a small message.

EASY LIFE



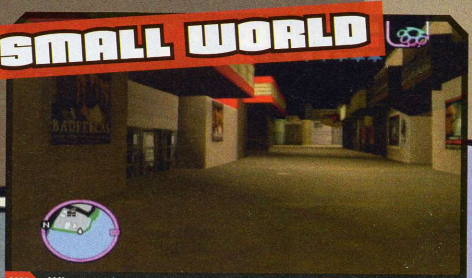
A great way to get guns and cash with little effort is to hang around the North Point Mall, at the top of the first island. War quickly breaks out between gangs and police officers, leaving you to mop up the money and firearms that they drop.

BALL CONTROL



Check the backyards of the mansions that are dotted around Starfish Island – one of them has a pool containing a beach ball. Walk into it and you'll kick it up into the air, allowing you to play a game of keepy-uppy with your head.

SMALL WORLD



When you've unlocked the movie studio, explore the hangars that are dotted around. In one of them, you'll find a small replica of the Red Light District from *GTA 3*. Like all such small details, they're best observed through the scope of a sniper rifle.

grand theft auto III

THE ENFORCER

The Enforcer is a heavily armoured police van. If you go to the police station in Staunton Island, get into a police car and drive through the gate around the back of the building, you can find one there.

DIY MOT

The 'full health' cheat (R2, R2, L1, R1, ←, ↓, →, ↑, ←, ↓, →, ↑) can be used when you're in a car, and it'll repair your vehicle. The visible damage won't vanish, but it'll be as healthy as a new ride.

TOP 5 CHEATS

All these cheats will even work on the *GTA* triple-pack for Xbox – we've tested 'em.

L2, L2, L1, R2, ←, ↓, →, ↑, ←, ↓, →, ↑ – Get all weapons.
→, R2, ○, R1, L2, ↓, L1, R1 – Cars can fly.
○, ○, ○, ○, ○, ○, R1, L2, L1, △, ○, △ – Spawn a tank.
L1, L1, ○, R2, △, L1, △ – Makes cars invisible.
△, ↑, →, ↓, ○, L1, L2 – High-speed gameplay.

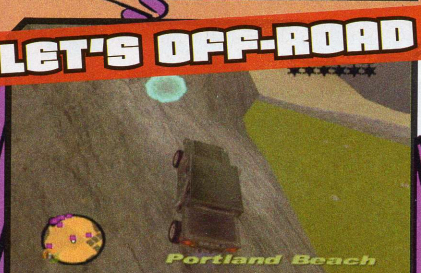
OOPSIE

Head down the alley to the left of the multi-storey car park near your hideout. Go up the stairs, park your car by the right-hand wall. Jump on it, then onto a roof, then into the fire escape area – there's a secret message...

FOR HIRE

Enter a taxi, and activate the 'Taxi Driver' missions. Keep it held down, get out of the cab and find a car you'd like to drive. Get in, and let go of the button – now you can do the taxi missions in the vehicle of your choice.

LET'S OFF-ROAD



The 4x4 missions are well hidden, but will reap you a *lot* of money. Activate them by getting into one of the 4x4s parked around the game – try the Patriot in the Supa Save parking lot.

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CHART

	TRUE	POLY
CRAZY	327386	321607
I WISH I WAS A PUNK ROCKER	327603	321661
SOS	327401	321621
IS IT ANY WONDER	327809	321668
INFERNAL - PARIS TO BERLIN	327408	321628
WHO KNEW	327810	321669
FASTER KILL PUSSYCAT	327845	321672
MANEATER	327846	321673
CONTROL MYSELF	327433	321651
COUNTRY GIRL	327811	321670

TALKING TONES

	TRUE
ASIAN TAXI	327168
DIRTY DWARVES	327173
LONDON UNDERGROUND	327174
COCKNEY GANGSTER	328404
BASIL FAWLTY	328396
BILL & TED	327298
KENNETH WILLIAMS	328424
DASTARDLY AND MUTLEY	328407
MAD GERMAN	328431

TOON TONES

	REAL
DAFFY DUCK	327352
ELMER FUDD	327357
FOGHORN LEGHORN	327359
SPEEDY GONZALES	327372
YOSEMITY SAM	327380
DASTARDLY AND MUTLEY	328407
SOUTHPARK	328458

REAL SOUNDS

	REAL
BO SELECTA MICHAEL JACKSON - SHAAMONE	328047
THE GREATEST FEMALE ORGASM EVER!!	328031
PULP FICTION - PATH OF THE RIGHTEOUS MAN	328051
CAR WHEELSPINS	328096
CATCH PHRASE BUZZER	327175
THE REAL PSYCHO ATTACK SOUND	328002
DR EVIL - THROW ME A BONE	328024
ACE VENTURA - ALRIGHTY THEN	328022
KICK YOUR ASS!	328038
ITALIAN JOB - BLOW THE BLOODY DOORS OFF	328040
BO SELECTA MICHAEL JACKSON - SHAAMONE	328047
MONKEY GOING NUTS	328080
HOUSTON WE HAVE A PROBLEM'	328109
FULL METAL JACKET - DRILL SARGEANT "DO YOU SUCK.?"	328138
AUSTIN POWERS - YOU'VE GOT MAIL BABY	328061

LEGENDS

	REAL
GUNS N ROSES - SWEET CHILD O MINE	328709
JOHN LENNON - IMAGINE	328743
QUEEN - DON'T STOP ME NOW	328846
NIRVANA - SMELLS LIKE TEEN SPIRIT	328897
RAGE AGAINST THE MACHINE - BULLET IN YOUR HEAD	328939
RED HOT CHILLI PEPPERS - CAN'T STOP	328944
ACDC - BACK IN BLACK	328495
MARVIN GAYE - I HEARD IT THROUGH THE GRAPEVINE	328818
PRINCE - PURPLE RAIN	328868
THE JAM - TOWN CALLED MALICE	327081
THE ROLLING STONES - PAINT IT BLACK	327203
THE VERVE - BITTERSWEET SYMPHONY	327207
THE WHITE STRIPES - SEVEN NATION ARMY	327209

WARNING TONES

	REAL
A**HOLE ALERT	327178
BULLSHI***R ALERT	327181
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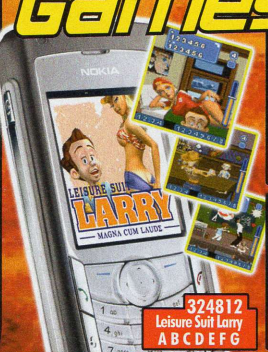

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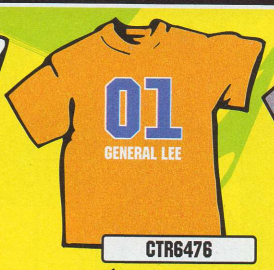

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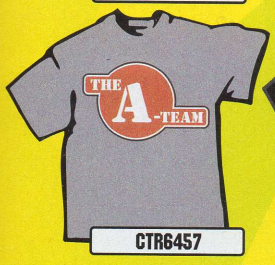

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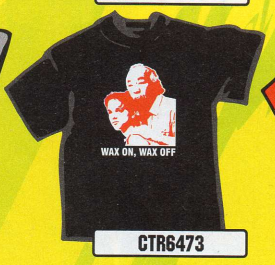

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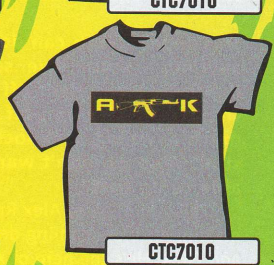
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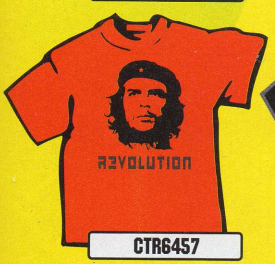

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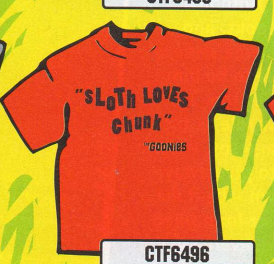

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Which of these is a *Dragon Ball Z* character?

A) GOKU
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C) GO GO

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WIN! FLATOUT 2

What's the fastest a vehicle has travelled flat-out on land?

A) 2100 MPH
B) 763 MPH
C) 90 MPH

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SPY GAMES!

As far as 14 year olds go, they don't get much more sickeningly gifted than super-spy Alex Rider...

This super-sleuth can do pretty much anything – scuba dive, snowboard, tightrope walk, fight off Great White sharks, disguise himself as pretty much anything, pick locks with an ear stud. Who wouldn't want to be able to do that?

This month sees Alex Rider making his videogaming debut on DS and GBA. He's the hero of Anthony Horowitz's *Stormbreaker* books, and you'll be seeing him on cinema screens – plus you'll get the chance to be him in the upcoming videogames too. To help you get into your new role as the James Bond-beating teenage spy, we've got some handy gadgets to give away. The first correct entry drawn – be it via post, text message, email or form filled in witth invisible ink and delivered via secret service-trained pigeon – wins first prize. That's an exclusive *Alex Rider Stormbreaker* bike, one of 50 red limited edition *Stormbreaker* Nintendo DS consoles and a Game Boy Micro. Our winner will also get copies of the game on both DS and GBA.

A further five runners up will also get prizes. We've got five prize packages containing *Alex Rider* on both DS and GBA and the official *Alex Rider* Funfax, book and board game.

Simply answer the question below and get your entries to us by August 1st to be in with a chance of winning!

Who does Alex Rider work for?
a) MI5
b) MI6
c) McDonalds

GET ON YOUR

3 WAYS TO ENTER:

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Scribble your answers on the form, cut it out, stuff it into an envelope and send it to Stormbreaker compo, GamesMaster, Future Publishing, 30 Monmouth Street, Bath, BA1 2BW.

2. EMAIL US

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WIN! CAPCOM CLASSICS REMIXED

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PC

A) JET SET WILLY
B) MAGIC SWORD
C) STRIDER

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WIN! PREY

What is a lion's main prey?

XBOX

A) ANTS
B) WILDEBEEST
C) CATS

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WIN! NEW SUPER MARIO BROS.

Which of these isn't one of your enemies in *New Super Mario Bros*?

DS

A) KOOPAS
B) GOOMBAS
C) SHADOW THE HEDGEHOG

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WIN!

- A *Stormbreaker* bike!
- DS and GBA games!
- DS and GBA consoles!
- *Stormbreaker* Funfax, book and board game!

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STORMBREAKER

Who does Alex Ryder work for?
- ☐ a) MI5
- ☐ b) MI6
- ☐ c) McDonalds

SUPER DRAGON BALL Z

Which of these is a Dragon Ball character?
- ☐ a) Goku
- ☐ b) Gizmo
- ☐ c) Go Go

PLATOUT 2

What's the fastest a vehicle has ever travelled flat-out on land?
- ☐ a) 2100mph
- ☐ b) 763mph
- ☐ c) 90mph

CAPCOM CLASSICS COLLECTION REMIXED

Which of the following isn't included in *Capcom Classics Collection Remixed*?
- ☐ a) Jet Set Willy
- ☐ b) Magic Sword
- ☐ c) Strider

PREY

What is a lion's main prey?
- ☐ a) Ants
- ☐ b) Wildebeest
- ☐ c) Strider

NEW SUPER MARIO BROS

Which of these isn't one of your enemies in *Mario Bros*?
- ☐ a) Koopas
- ☐ b) Goombas
- ☐ c) Shadow the Hedgehog

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GM 172 WINNERS

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SONIC RIDERS: Bradley Ward, Warwickshire, Nick Oatley, Watford, Robert Tockington, Surrey

SPLINTER CELL ESSENTIALS: Vincenzo Vetere, St Albons, Callum Dixon, Milton Keynes, John Harvey, London, Donald Ridley, Poole, Ben Pigot, Lincs

LORD OF THE RINGS: BATTLE FOR MIDDLE-EARTH 2: Melvin Magaby, Liverpool, Josh, Southampton, Simon Talbot, Manchester

ANIMAL CROSSING: WILD WORLD: Jason Rouse, Wiltshire, Adam Snow, Herts, Aled Fletcher, Shropshire, Paul Osborn, Buckinghamshire, Harry Salatas, London

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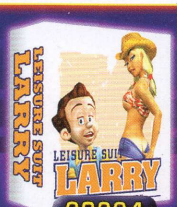

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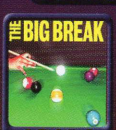

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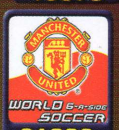

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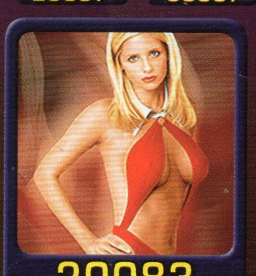
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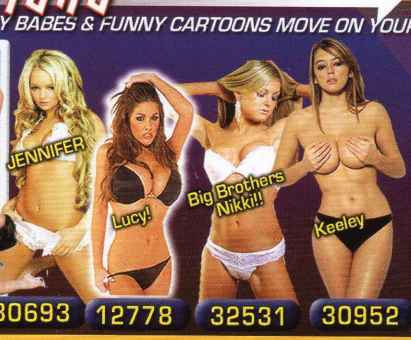

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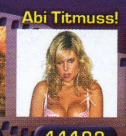

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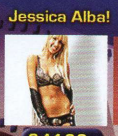

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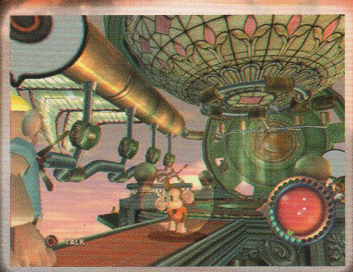

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